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‘SPIRITUAL SONGS.’

LONDON

PRINTED BY SPOTTISWOODE AND CO.

NEW-STREET SQUARE

‘SPIRITUAL SONGS’

FOR THE

SUNDAYS AND HOLYDAYS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

BY

JOHN S. B. MONSELL, LL.D.

VICAR OF EGHAM, AND RURAL DEAN :

AUTHOR OF ‘PARISH MUSINGS’ ETC.

‘Speaking to yourselves in Psalms and Hymns and SPIRITUAL SONGS,
singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.’

EPHESIANS V. 19.

THE FOURTH EDITION, REVISED.

LONDON:

LONGMAN, GREEN, LONGMAN, ROBERTS, & GREEN.

1864.

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THE following POEMS were written amid the orange and olive groves of Italy, during a winter spent (for the sake of health) upon the shores of the Mediterranean Sea.

Their aim is the highest to which any human compositions may aspire—to honour God, and help man along the way to Heaven.

Their attainment of this object must of course largely depend upon the extent to which they have caught the pure spirit of those sacred seasons which called them forth, and which they are designed to illustrate.

It has pleased God so far to prosper them, that a Fourth Edition has been called for.

After a careful revision they are now sent forth again into the world with the same hope and prayer which accompanied them on their first departure:—That they may, under God, lead some souls into a more fervent use of our English Ritual; teaching them how truly—in its deep earnestness and tender spirituality—‘we have the mind of Christ.’

EGHAM VICARAGE, SURREY :

Easter, 1864.

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THE DAWN.

Advent Sunday.

The night is far spent, the day is at hand.—Rom. xiii. 12.

THE sky is dark with storm and cloud,
The winds are piping high and loud,
The outer air is dull and chill,
The snow lies heavy on the hill;
Yet there is gladness in the soul,
No clouds or darkness may control;
And on the heart a golden glow
Warmer than summer sunsets know.

God bless the calm and holy cheer
That ushers in the Christian year,
And, whatsoe'er of gloom or shade
Season or sorrow may have made,
Lifts us, with its mysterious power,
Out of the dark and dying hour,
Into the lights which ever play
Round children of th' Eternal Day.

Blest Advent of our ling'ring Lord!
How high the hope, how sure the word,
That thus, with every year's return,
Makes our dull hearts within us burn

For that long-sought and promised day,
When 'Heaven and Earth shall pass away,'
And Christ from highest Heav'ns shall come
To take His waiting people home.

Since childhood's early hours, our eyes
Have watch'd the East for reddening skies!
Year after year has Advent brought
Nearer to us the Prize we sought;
But still it lingers—O that we
Were more prepared to welcome Thee!
Thine Advent with its angel throng
Would not be tarrying, Lord, so long.



THE MORNING.

Second Sunday in Advent.

Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.—Rom. xv. 4.

BLESSED Lord, Who, till the morning
Of Thine Advent shall appear,
Words of hope hast left, and warning,
Souls to strengthen, guide, and cheer ;

Left them 'written for our learning,'
Pointing out the narrow way,
Lest our hearts, with all their yearning
After home, should go astray.

Grant us, in those sacred pages,
Grace to find the gifts untold,
Which, for ages upon ages,
Did Thy people's hearts uphold.

Grant us, in the sacred story
Of the deeds which Thou hast done,
Grace to catch those gleams of glory,
That on saint and martyr shone

From Thy life so high and holy,
From Thy love so deep and pure,
From Thy head, which bowed so lowly,
Pains for others to endure ;

From Thy heart so meekly bearing
All the scorn of sinful men,
Lord of legions ! yet so sparing !
Never answering again !

O how blessed thus to linger
O'er the steps which Thou hast trod,
While Thy Cross with silent finger
Points the upward way to God,

In the path of self-denial,
Meekly borne for love of Thee,
Wearing out life's weary trial,
Till the blushing dawn we see :

'With our lamps well trimm'd and burning,'
Patient through Thy Holy Word,
Watching for the bright returning
Of our too long absent Lord.



ODOURS OF THE DAY.



Third Sunday in Advent.

*Ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of
God.—1 Cor. iv. 1.*



S odours, press'd in summer hours
From summer's bloom, remain
To soothe and comfort, till the flowers
Of spring revive again ;

So, till ' the Rose of Sharon ' bloom
Once more, the desert's pride,
We feed upon the rich perfume
It yielded when it died.

' In earthen vessels,' weak and frail,
The heav'nly treasure lies,
Enriching every passing gale
With fragrance of the skies—

Faint breathings of the blessed morn,
That Advent shall restore,
When Christ shall to His own return,
Nor ever leave them more.

Thy sacred ministers, O Lord,
Who at Thine altars stand,
Who break the bread, who ' preach the word,'
And wait on Thy command—

Like censers in this world of sin,
Full of Thy fragrant love,
Till fresher fragrance usher in
Thine Advent from above—

O fill them with Thy grace, that they,
To God and sinners true,
May lead as well as point the way,
And what they teach may do.

And all our hearts make ‘holy ground,’
So, at Thine Advent, we
A people ready shall be found,
Prepared, Lord, for Thee.



JOY IN THE LORD.



Fourth Sunday in Advent.

Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say, Rejoice.—Phil. iv. 4.



ALWAY in the Lord rejoice,
Lift, my soul, thy heart and voice,
Lift them holy, high and pure,
For His mercies aye endure!

Up to heav'n where He doth live,
Thro' the world which He doth give,
Raise thy heart and lift thy voice,
'And again I say, Rejoice!'

Gently all thy trials take,
They are thine for Jesu's sake;
Meekly 'mid thy mercies move,
They are thine thro' Jesu's love.

All thou hast and all thou art
Own as His with thankful heart,
Use as His with heedful care,
For His coming to prepare.

'Let your moderation be
Known to all men.' They shall see
What God's grace can make of those
Who upon His truth repose.

Live above, tho' living in,
This polluting world of sin,
Whether change or chance befall,
Using, not 'abusing,' all.

Live in faith and live in prayer,
In His presence everywhere ;
Live as angels, tho' on earth,
Children of the second birth.

Live as those who on His eye
Hang with love, and walk thereby ;
'In thy lot' preparèd stand,
For the Lord is nigh at hand !



THE LIGHT OF LIFE.

Christmas Day.

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.—John i. 14.



BLESSED morning ! all the year
 Draws its light and warmth from thee ;
 When thy dawning doth appear,
 Night departs and shadows flee.

Suns may rise and suns may set,
 Summers come and summers go,
 Earth its wintry grave forget,
 When the vernal breezes blow ;

But the day would be as night,
 And the summer winter prove,
 If the rising of thy light
 Did not wake our souls to love.

O the blessedness of those
 Who thine inner sunshine feel,
 With its calm and soft repose,
 Gently o'er their spirits steal ;

Who, as earth doth own the power
 Of her sun her life to wake,
 Burst, as doth an opening flower,
 Into life for Jesu's sake !

In His house, in holy mood,
We have knelt and prayed to-day,
By His body and His blood
Strengthened for our heavenly way :

In the manger we have laid
All our worldly pomp and pride,
Where with beasts the Saviour made
His first cradle, side by side :

On the mountain we have heard
Sweeter chimes than ever rang,
Or Creation's silence stirred
Since the stars of morning sang :

One bright angel told the story,
Myriads answer'd him again :
'Unto God in highest, glory !
Peace on earth, good will toward men.'

In our homes His blessed name
Brightens joy round every hearth,
And its meetest place doth claim
In the Christian's evening mirth.

Homes with crowded love were fair,
On the night when Thou wast born ;
Fill them, Lord, with love and prayer
For the day of Thy return.

And as Thou, to make us Thine,
Stoop'd a mortal man to be,
Fill us with Thy life divine,
Lift our life in love to Thee.

THE GENTLE WITNESS.

St. Stephen's Day.

And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.—Acts vii. 59, 60.

FIRST of the martyred throng
 To join his Lord above,
 First to commence the endless song
 Of His redeeming love;
 First to essay the sword and shield,
 The holy Stephen takes the field.

First to obtain a crown,
 First—by the mercy-seat—
 To lay the blood-bought trophy down
 At its dear Owner's feet;
 Through the grave-gates the Saviour burst,
 He homeward, heavenward, enter'd first.

Men thought the sufferer dead,
 And high exultings kept,
 But on his blood-stained stony bed
 The saint serenely slept,
 Wrapped in the banner of the Cross,
 His all the gain—theirs all the loss.

Lord, grant Thy grace, that we,
Whate'er our lot may prove,
May learn his high fidelity,
His deep forgiving love ;
That boldness which could part with life,
And yet be *gentle* in the strife.



THE BOSOM FRIEND.

St. John's Bay.

*Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples whom
Jesus loved.—John xiii. 23.*



ON my Saviour's bosom leaning,
Drawing thence His mystic meaning,
Hearing there the springs that move
His unutterable love—

Thence by daily draughts receiving,
From that well-spring of believing,
Faith, which teacheth how to lean
Amid sight on things unseen—

Waiting, watching, ling'ring near Him,
All life long to love and fear Him,
Finding this my best employ,
Chiefest business, purest joy !

Thus while years away are wearing,
For the coming night preparing,
For the night, and then the day,
When the shadows flee away ;

On His loving bosom lying,
Working, resting, living, dying,
In His presence to awake,
When the morn of morns shall break ;

Thus, my soul, with each returning
Of this Day, let all thy yearning
Be, like the belov'd, to rest
Ever on thy Saviour's breast.



SUFFERING FOR JESUS.

The Holy Innocents.

These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile : for they are without fault before the throne of God.—Rev. xiv. 4, 5.



REAM not, my soul, of cloudless days,
If thou wouldst follow in the ways
Which thy dear Saviour trod ;
Strait is the gate, the pathway steep,
Hard to be found, and hard to keep,
Which leads us up to God.

With no delusive hope of joy,
Such as experience may destroy,
Are we by Christ beguiled ;
No votive flowers deck His bed,
But martyr heaps of infant-dead
Surround the Royal Babe.

Would we His faithful followers be,
We must in this true warning see
Of future grief and care ;
And feel *that* love were little worth
Which shrinks from any cross on earth
We may for Jesus bear.

O well it is that, when our sight
Of duty in the dazzling light
Of glory might be lost,
The Church her martyr's triple shade
A blest retreat for souls has made,
Where they may count the cost ;

And ask, if for the Lord, Who gave
His life their precious souls to save,
They would their lives lay down ;
For he who will not suffer loss,
Or meekly bear for Christ his cross,
Shall never wear a crown.

O Saviour ! for whom infants died,
Whom even infants glorified,
In life and death the same,
Grant us, by pure and holy lives,
And faith, which life and death survives,
To glorify Thy Name.



GOD WITH US.

Sunday after Christmas Day.

*And they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is,
God with us.—Matt. i. 23.*



AST Sunday of the work-day year,
How sweetly falls on heart and ear
That blessed Name, by which we know
That God, thro' all our weal and woe,

Is with us, and will ever make
Our cause His own, for Jesus' sake !

When toiling through this world of care,
Depressed in faith, and faint in prayer,
Distracted by life's sinful ways,
With baffled hopes, and cloudy days,
What pledge in that one word is given
To weary earth of watchful Heaven !

When on the losses, which have cast
Their shadow o'er the year that's past,
Or on the cares, whose trembling gloom
Is hanging o'er the year to come,
The troubled heart despondent dwells,
How ' God with us ' all gloom dispels !

If God be with us, who hath power
To harm us in the weakest hour?
If God be with us, loss and pain
Touched by His Presence turn to gain!
All clouds and darkness then do take
The hues of heaven for Jesus' sake!

Alas! that we should ever prove
Unthankful for such tender love;
Alas! that we, when God would thus
For ever be a 'God with us,'
Should force Him from the gentle path,
To be against us in His wrath.



NEW YEAR'S DAY.



The Circumcision of Christ.

Put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him: where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all, and in all.—Col. iii. 10, 11.



HAPPY, happy Christmas!
A merry bright New Year!
How sweet the kind old greetings
To every heart and ear!

No matter how care-burdened,
No matter how deprest,
A something in their welcome
Is dear to every breast.

We heard them in our childhood,
With spirits light and gay—
We dreamt not then their gladness
Could ever pass away;
And tho' years long and weary
Have sobered many a heart,
The joy still ling'ring round them
Can never quite depart:—

Nor ever shall—if wisely
We count the rolling years,
Not as our joys removing,
But sins, and cares, and tears:

And upward, onward bearing
To that bright land, and blest,
Where 'sinners cease from troubling,
And weary ones have rest.'

No year can open sadly
For him whose heart doth yearn,
Above all hopes and longings,
To see his Lord's return.
Stars in the daylight vanish,
Clouds in the sunshine glow,
So in life's sunless glory
Fade joys and griefs below.

My soul, wouldst thou securely
The opening year begin?
Come kneel by Jesu's cradle,
And count the cost of sin!
His tears were wept to cheer thee,
His grief was for thy gain,
And of thy joy the octave
Is His first cry of pain.

Thence let the year its aspect
Of sober duty take,
Rise up, go forth, do all things
For thy Redeemer's sake;
And 'mid the world's temptation
Remember for thy good,
On New Year's Day thy Saviour
First shed His 'precious blood.'

HOUSEHOLD JOY.

The Epiphany.

That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the Gospel.—Eph. iii. 6.

HOW calm, how blest this tranquil hour
 Of household evening joy!
 The world shut out, with all its power
 To trouble or annoy ;

The world shut out, and love shut in,
 With youth and gentle mirth,
 Which ever make their pleasant din
 Best by the household hearth.

The duties of the day are done,
 Its toil and burden o'er,
 To claim, until the rising sun,
 Our anxious hearts no more.

Then let us rest amid the gifts
 God's tenderness hath given,
 And bless each blessing as it lifts
 Our grateful hearts to Heaven.

Whence have we this secure repose,
 This light in evening's gloom,
 This warm and cheerful gleam that glows
 Round all the pleasant room ?—

These songs of joy, these smiles of love,
These voices soft and low,
That talk with us of home above,
And brighten home below ?

Long time ago, a wondrous star
Led o'er a trackless way
Three Gentile sages from afar
To where an Infant lay—

In swaddling clothes—all helpless bound,
In poor and mean abode,
And there in Him the Gentiles found
Their Saviour and their God.

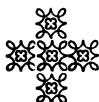
Thence come all joy, all love, all light,
That gladden Christian homes ;
Our very safety day and night
From that one Dwelling comes :

The Sun that morning star foretold
High in meridian stands,
Now scatt'ring gifts an hundredfold
O'er all the Gentile lands.

How cold and heartless they must be
Who all these blessings share,
Yet grudge, on Christ's Epiphany,
Their meed of praise and prayer !—

Who as their right those mercies take
Which round their pathway fall,
Forgetful that for Jesu's sake
God's love bestows them all !

Lord, keep us from such sinfulness,
And give us grace to prove
How they whom Thou dost daily bless
Can give back love for love.



THE CHRISTIAN'S BUSINESS.

First Sunday after Epiphany.

Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?—Luke ii. 49.

OFT doth the Christian's heart inquire,
 What does my God of me desire?
 What service holy, pure, and high,
 Can He receive from such as I?
 With heart and hands alike defiled,
 Poor erring tho' repentant child!

Christian! thy God deems nothing due
 But what He gives thee grace to do,
 And nought as worthy doth He take
 Save what is done for Jesu's sake:
 With such pure trust, and simple aim,
 Thy lowliest deed His smile may claim.

The highest duties oft are found
 Lying upon the lowest ground:
 In hidden and unnoticed ways,
 In household works, on common days,
 Whate'er is done for God alone
 Thy God acceptable will own.

To do our 'Father's business' here
In humble reverence and fear,
Meekly upon His will to wait,
In little things as well as great,
Contented in our lot to rest,
'Tis thus the Christian serves Him best.

Whether our path of duty be
In public or in privacy,
To teach or to be taught in truth,
Submit to age, or bear with youth,
We must be wisest in the school,
And gentlest under parent's rule.

Like Christ in all things we must prove,
His life our model, and His love
The only pure unfailing spring
Of holiness in every thing—
The only law by which we e'er
Can do our 'Father's business' here.



FESTAL JOY.

Second Sunday after Epiphany.

And both Jesus was called, and His disciples, to the marriage.—John ii. 2.



OME use religion as a cloak,
Which need be only worn
When solemn days, by custom's claim,
At stated times return.

'T is decent then, with Sunday clothes,
To put the semblance on,
To be as easily put off
When the dull day is done.

Alas ! how little can *they* know
The life divine within,
The gain, the loss, the joy, the woe,
Of holiness and sin.

He who hath tasted and hath seen
How gracious is the Lord,
Whose hungry soul hath fed upon
The manna of His word—

Whose desolate and lonely heart
Hath brightened with the glow
Of that approving smile of Love
The pardon'd only know—

He would not change one hour of peace
For all the world could give,
Nor deem that it were life at all
Without his God to live.

Not in the holy place alone,
Nor only when in prayer,
Doth he His gracious presence feel,
But always, everywhere.

The world with all its goodliest gains,
Home with its calmest rest,
Life's heaviest and life's lightest hours,
Without Him are unblest.

So, when of old the marriage feast
Was spread, they sought the Lord,
Joy from His gentle Presence flowed,
And plenty from His word.

He checked no gladness, such as might
The Christian's heart become,
From Him no cloud did ever fall
Over a Christian home.

And so let all our festal joy
Be in His presence found,
And so let every spot on earth
Be counted 'holy ground ;'

And every day a solemn day,
In which His gentle voice,
Speaking to us in every sound,
Bids every heart rejoice.

He shares our griefs : let us our joys
With Him devoutly share,
And every festive day we keep,
Be our Redeemer there !



THE POWER OF FAITH.

Third Sunday after Epiphany.

Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee.—Matt. viii. 13.

HATH the Church of God received
This great promise from His Son,
‘Go, and, as thou hast believed,
So it ever shall be done’?

Why then has she failed to gladden
Hearts and homes with Gospel light,
Which life’s clouds and darkness sadden
Thro’ the long unwakened night?

Hath her God forgot His promise?
Is His hand too short to save?

Can the evil One wrest from us
What the great and good One gave?
Or have we forgot the treasure
That in trust and trial lies,

When strong Prayer in boundless measure
Wins its answer from the skies?

Where the Gentile faith, which rested
On the hope that gave it birth,
Till the Lord Himself confest it
As a marvel upon earth?

Throwing into shade the shining
Of His people's highest noon,
Omen of their sad declining
Clouds to settle o'er them soon !

Lord ! our sleeping souls awaken,
Lead us forth to work for Thee,
And restore Thy long-forsaken
To the land where they would be ;
So, through us, each Gentile nation
Thine Epiphany shall learn,
And her long-lost ' consolation '
Unto Israel return.



PEACE IN JESUS.



Fourth Sunday after Epiphany.

*And He saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith ?
Then He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea ; and there was a
great calm.—Matt. viii. 26.*



HY, my soul, so sad and fearful,
Crossing life's dark ocean tide ?
Why that upward eye so tearful ?
Christ is sleeping by thy side !

Tho' the storm and tossing billow
Seem the only presence near,
Christ is nearer, on a pillow
Sleeping by thee—wherefore fear ?

Wakes the storm ?—it is to try thee !
Sleeps the Christ ?—'t is for thy sake !
Let thy heart but feel Him nigh thee,
Lift thy voice—and He'll awake :

He'll awake, and wind and ocean
Soon shall bow before His will,
All thy weary heart's emotion
Hushed before His ' Peace, be still.'

GENTLENESS.

*Fifth Sunday after Epiphany.**Let both grow together until the harvest.—Matt. xiii. 30.*

ENTLY think and gently speak.
 Art thou strong?—respect the weak.
 Art thou weak?—from what thou art,
 Gently judge another's heart.

Gentle thoughts and gentle words
 Ever were thy Saviour Lord's,
 Shall the fellow-worm reprove,
 When the holy God is Love?

He, who knew the thoughts of men,
 He was gentle ; let us then
 Gentle be in thought and tone,
 We, who scarce can read our own.

Spirits harsh and words unkind,
 Like to rough ungentle wind,
 Often scatter ' precious seed,'
 Often break the ' bruised reed.'

Patiently that Day abide,
 When ' the angels ' shall divide ;
 When ' the Harvest ' shall declare,
 Which the wheat, and which the tare.

Now let both together grow,
God Himself alone can know
Who hath faith, and who hath none,
Which His foe, and which His son.

O how sad it then will be
One afflicted soul to see—
Hurt thro' thy mistaken zeal,
Hurt beyond thy power to heal.

Rain, and dews, and sunshine fall
With unbounded love on all ;
Shall man's narrow heart refuse
Its poor sun, and rain, and dews ?

Then be gentle, O my soul,
Thoughts and words alike control ;
If thou must in aught decide,
Err upon the gentle side.

Gentleness can do no wrong
To the weak or to the strong,
Be thou strong or be thou weak,
Gently think and gently speak.



THE HIDDEN HOPE.

Sixth Sunday after Epiphany.

*And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as
He is pure.—1 John iii. 3.*

BLESSED hope! that we the sinful
May be like to Thee the Lord,
Our degraded souls exalted
By Thy wonder-working word.

'T was for this, O blessed Jesus,
Thou didst leave Thy bright abode,
To destroy the works of Satan,
'And make us the sons of God,'

And to souls all lost and hopeless
This reviving hope impart—
That the lost may be restored
And the vile be 'pure in heart.'

Here the world but little knows us,
Or our title to the skies,
We are but the wild enthusiasts
'T is the fashion to despise.

But within our grateful bosoms
We 'a hidden treasure' hold,
Which we would not give the worldling
For his glory or his gold.

Blessed is the fond assurance
Of our God, that we are His,
Blessed is the hope and promise—
‘We shall see Him as He is.’

Shall *we* waste our hours in folly
Who may this reward secure,
To be purified and holy,
Even as our God is pure?

Gracious Saviour! tho’ ‘it doth not
Yet appear what we shall be,’
Still we know that, when Thou comest,
We shall then be like to Thee.

And we live upon the promise
On the mount by Thee bestowed,
‘Blessed are the pure in spirit,
They alone shall see their God.’



TWILIGHT.

*Septuagesima Sunday.**So run, that ye may obtain.—1 Cor. ix. 24.*

S with gentle modulation
 Chords of music melt and flow
 Down from strains of exultation
 Into plaintive notes of woe—

As with soft and tender shading
 Farewell beams of parting day,
 O'er the evening landscape fading,
 Into twilight die away—

So the Church's songs of gladness
 Change their key to heart and ear—
 So steals on with sober sadness
 The dim twilight of her year.

Late her Saviour Lord's appearing
 Filled each heart and swelled each strain,
 Now the solemn time is nearing
 When He passes into pain.

Late, tho' round a lowly manger,
 Angels sang and glory shone,
 Now He passes into danger,
 In the wilderness alone :

And His Church with fond affection
Bids her children all prepare
To partake of His dejection
Low in penitence and prayer.

Lord, our souls and bodies render
Meet to watch and kneel and pray
By Thy love, so true and tender,
All thro' that long battle-day.

Grant us that instinctive yearning
Which the Christian's soul doth move,
To be ever near Thee, learning
The deep secrets of Thy love.

And, tho' 'justly our offences'
Shut us out from joy and Thee,
Keep us near Thee, for from thence is
All the light our souls can see :

Keep us near Thee, in Thy fasting,
In Thy peril and Thy pain ;
That, our garland everlasting,
Running so, we may obtain.



CHRISTIAN CHIVALRY.

Seragesima Sunday.

If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.—2 Cor. xi. 30.



WAKE, my soul! and for the strife
Of onward upward Christian life
In earnest faith prepare;
Where the fight rages fierce and high,
Goes forth the Church's chivalry,
And thou too must be there.

Thy Lord awaits thee in the field,
Bring forth the spear, essay the shield,
And bind thine armour on;
Low tho' thou art, for thee there's fame,
By thee a high and honour'd name
And glory may be won.

Never, in tourney or in fight,
Did warrior old win name so bright
As thou mayst win and wear,
If, like the valiant ones of old,
Thy faith be high, thy heart be bold
To do as well as dare.

Not with a sword by bloodshed stain'd,
Nor for a wreath that, soon as gain'd,
 Shall fade upon thy brow ;
But with the sword of God's good Word,
And for the ' Well done ' of thy Lord,
 Go forth and conquer now.

Wait not till foes in serried line
And burnish'd armour flash and shine,
 To tempt thee to the fray ;
Thine enemies are all around,
And every spot is battle-ground
 Where thou canst ' watch and pray.'

In little things of common life,
There lies the Christian's noblest strife—

 When he does conscience make
Of every thought and throb within,
And words and looks of self and sin
 Crushes for Jesus' sake ;

And all the while no glory sees
Save in his own infirmities,
 Which magnify the Grace
That out of weakness strength can bring,
And give so low and vile a thing
 In God's high work a place.

Then up, my soul, and onward press
To Jesus—in the wilderness
 He waits and fights for thee ;
Thy love to Him devoutly prove
By deeds, not words, and let His love
 Thy ' Shield and buckler ' be.

THE CALL OF CHRIST.

Quinquagesima Sunday.

Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.—Luke xviii. 38.



ESUS CHRIST! thou Son of David!

Mercy, mercy have on me;

For my soul, too long enslavèd,

Sighs for liberty and Thee.

On life's wayside, dull and dreary,

I can hear Thee passing by,

But my heart is sad and weary

Till I see Thee with mine eye.

Long, alas! by passion blinded,

Wand'ring off the narrow way,

O how hard it is to find it!

Turn, my Saviour, turn and stay.

Hush, poor soul! thy Lord is going

On to weariness and pain;

Wilt thou then, this secret knowing,

Care to lift thy voice again?

Yes! I will—His very sorrow

Makes me know He feels for mine,

Thence alone my heart doth borrow

All its hope of light divine.

Had He stayed in bliss above me,
I might doubt His care to bless,
But what proof, that He doth love me,
Better than the wilderness?

There let His sweet voice allure me,
I will follow and have rest,
Certain that He will ensure me
Comfort in the way that's best.

But canst *thou*, with calm conviction,
Trust Him even tho' He slay,
And His footsteps of affliction
Follow, as the safest way?

Yes! I can—let me but hear Him,
I shall follow that sweet Voice,
Thankful only to be near Him,
Till His light my soul rejoice:

Waiting till His glory lighten
These dark eyes to look on Him,
And behold His sunshine brighten
All that else on earth were dim.

Only let my Lord precede me,
Only let Him deign to bless,
I shall follow—lead me, lead me,
'Up into the wilderness.'

Rise, glad soul! thy prayer is granted,
Soon thy longing eyes shall see
That for which thy heart hath panted:
Rise, thy Saviour calleth thee.

MISERERE DOMINE.

—♦—

Ash Wednesday.

*Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your
God.—Joel ii. 13.*

MY sin! my sin! O God! my sin
Lies heavy on this heart within,
All thro' the dreary live-long day
Wearing my aimless life away,
All thro' the weary watch of night,
Tossing my bed till morning's light,
It lays its heavy load on me:
Miserere Domine!

My sin! my sin! O God! my sin!
Where does its sad account begin?
Far off in early wasted years
I see it thro' these dimming tears;
Hence my whole life its clouds attend
With darkening shadow: where the end
Of all this shade and gloom for me?
Miserere Domine!

My sin! my sin! O God! my sin!
What power shall peace and pardon win?
What shall blot out the scarlet stain
That doth upon my soul remain?

What will for me with Mercy plead—
For me with Justice intercede—
Break these sad chains, and set me free?
Miserere Domine !

My grief! my grief! O God! my grief
Finds in Thy sorrows its relief;
My soul kneels down by Thy distress,
And, with Thee in the wilderness,
Watching Thy long and patient fast,
Conflict, and triumph at the last,
Finds heart to lift its voice to Thee :
Miserere Domine !

Thy pain! Thy pain! O God! Thy pain
Is my heart's ease, Thy loss my gain :
Thy love in all its depths and heights,
These forty days and forty nights,
My soul will measure, scale, and prove,
Until it learn itself—to love,
And fix its only hope on Thee :
Miserere Domine !

Thy fast! Thy fast! O God! Thy fast
Shall thus become my feast at last,
When, thro' long days and nights of care,
And deep heart-searchings, faith and prayer
Shall take the sins they have descried,
And lay them by Thy suffering side,
And lift their voice, and cry to Thee,
Miserere Domine !

FASTINGS WITH CHRIST.

First Sunday in Lent.

And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He was afterward an-hungred.—Matt. iv. 2.

THE Lord, who sits enthron'd in light,
 With regal glory crowned,
 Eternal in His matchless might,
 Whom angels worship round,
 Watches for man in his distress,
 Alone, and in the wilderness.

The Lord, who on a thousand hills
 The cattle daily feeds,
 Who with ten thousand thousand rills
 Waters the parchèd meads,
 Who gives His people 'daily bread'—
 He is a-thirst, an-hungered !

The Lord—Who from His angel throne
 The Prince of darkness threw,
 Then came on earth to give His own
 Power to bruise him too,
 Whose heel could crush the Serpent's head—
 Across the Serpent's trail is led.

The Lord—who by one living word
 Could dash him to the ground—
Uses the forged and well-tried sword
 With every Christian found ;
The ‘ It is written,’ in which we
Our best defence shall ever see.
O Saviour ! shall we see Thee thus
 In weakness, want, and woe,
Conscious that it was all for us
 Thy Godhead stoop’d so low ;
And shall we shrink with Thee to share
Thy fastings in the desert air ?
Shall we, in light and giddy mirth,
 Pass with the worldling by,
Nor deem Thy costly sufferings worth
 One sympathising sigh ;
But, ’mid such undeservèd woes,
Go feast and revel with Thy foes ?
When Thou didst leave Thy home divine
 To save our souls, shall we
No lawful things of earth resign,
 To show our love to Thee ?
Shall we take all the gift and gain,
And leave Thee all the price and pain ?
Didst Thou for forty days and nights
 All food and rest refuse ?
How boastful then the soul that slights
 What Thou didst deign to use !
When Thou didst so Thyself prepare,
Need we no fastings and no prayer ?

HELP IN HINDRANCES.

Second Sunday in Lent.

Great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt.—Matt. xv. 28.



LONG and earnestly she pleaded,
Grief and faith her spirit stirred,
Mercy for her child she needed,
But He answer'd not a word.

Still she pray'd, and drew the nearer,
Sorrow made her spirit bold,
For she felt her Lord would hear her,
Tho' all other hearts were cold.

Yes! He hears her, but the token
That her voice had reached His ear,
When that silence sad is broken,
Fails her drooping heart to cheer:

'She is but a Gentile stranger,
Israel's fold His chiefest care:'
Surely this repulse will change her
Earnest pleading to despair.

Still she prayed, and still she pleaded,
Tho' all hope seem'd wellnigh past;
'But the bread the children needed
Cannot to the dogs be cast.'

Oh how cold the outward seeming
Of such answer to her cry !
Was she waking ? was she dreaming ?
Could this be her Lord's reply ?

Yet how gently is she able
Still to plead, in spite of all ?
'Truth ! but crumbs from off the table
Even to the dogs may fall.'

It is done ! the cloud hath melted,
Yon dark cloud so cold before ;
Sunshine bathes her, she hath felt it
Pass into her spirit's core :

He, who seemed so dull to hear her,
Answered not thro' very love,
Stood aloof, to draw her nearer,
Moved not, that her soul might move :

All that shade, and seeming coldness,
Hanging o'er His gentle face,
He assumed to stir her 'boldness'
Coming to the 'throne of grace.'

Now with tenderness inclining
He doth turn to soothe her pain,
She like 'tender grass' is 'shining'
In His sunshine 'after rain.'

Thus, my soul, in all thy pleadings
Let thy faith unwearied be,
What at first seem lets are leadings
Sent to help, not hinder thee.

Trust the promises, which never
Fail to answer earnest prayer :
Clouds may rise, but Love is ever
Shining bright behind them there.

And thro' all this Lenten season
Watch and wait, and trust and pray,
Sure there is some blessed reason,
If Love linger on the way.

They, who can with crumbs content them,
Thankful on the least to live,
Soon shall have all blessings sent them
Which the Lord of Life can give.



THE WORSE STATE.

Third Sunday in Lent.

The last state of that man is worse than the first.—Luke xi. 26.



NOT always in the goodliest rite,
The swept and garnished ground
Of forms, most fair to human sight,
Is Jesus to be found.

For the mere words, with which we claim
His love, He doth not care ;
We must be gathered in His name,
Or else He is not there.

And tho' He ever hears the cry
Of those whose hearts complain,
And none, who seek Him earnestly,
Can seek His face in vain,

Yet men may fast from week to week,
In form may mourn and pray,
While the good gifts they seem to seek
May still be far away.

In prayer and fasting let us strive
To keep our bodies down,
To save our precious souls alive
And win a glorious crown.

For it is hard to conquer sin,
And climb the narrow road,
And wishes only will not win
An entrance unto God.

Yet on those blessed means of grace
Our souls must not depend ;
Theirs simply is the handmaid's place
Of means unto an end.

But used in faith, with grace they teem
For every troubled mind,
As to the leper Jordan's stream,
As Siloam to the blind.

Nor must we only for awhile
Put off the sins we mourn,
To flatter conscience, and beguile
The hours till they return ;

But low in penitence must lie,
In deed as well as word,
Cut off the hand, pluck out the eye
Offensive to the Lord.

Use thus, my soul, with equal care
This sad but gracious time,
For prayerless fast, or fastless prayer,
To God shall never climb.

Watch lest the blessings offer'd thee
Thro' thine own fault be curst,
And thy last state may haply be
Far worse than was thy first.

THE GREAT PROVIDER.

Fourth Sunday in Lent.

Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? (And this He said to prove him, for He Himself knew what He would do).—
John vi. 6.



WHEN the faint and famish'd thousands
Round their Saviour Lord did press,
And He asked, how He might feed them
In the hungry wilderness;

Coldly reasoning, Philip answers
As the rules of sense accord,
Thoughtless that the meek Inquirer
Was the all-providing Lord.

Soon all human schemes confounded
Lay their selfish reasonings by,
And a few poor loaves and fishes
Blest, abundance doth supply—

To remind the Lord's disciples,
That if they to Him be true,
Nought, their utmost need requireth,
Is too hard for Him to do.

Let us take the bright example,
Let us seek Him for Himself,
Ready for His sake to trample
On all worldly power or pelf.

Let us freely trust our bodies
Where our souls their safety own,
Mindful that the man-immortal
' Doth not live by bread alone.'

Count not with such selfish caution
What may vex, or what may please :
Art thou earnest ? Seek thy Saviour,
Yea ! at any cost of ease.

He would rather work a wonder,
Drop from Heav'n itself their food,
Rather than that souls, which trust Him,
Aught should want of needful good.



THE HIDDEN FACE.

*Fifth Sunday in Lent.**But Jesus hid Himself.—John viii. 59.*

ESUS, my loving Lord ! I know
 How much my welfare stands
 In loss or cross for Thee below,
 Therefore I'm in Thy hands :
 Do aught that seemeth good to Thee,
 But hide not Thou Thyself from me.

'T is not the wilderness I dread,
 Its peril or its pain ;
 No pathway Thou didst ever tread,
 But with its grief hath gain ;
 I can bear all, so it may be
 Thou wilt not hide Thyself from me.

And well I know Thou dost not love
 That gentle face to hide,
 Only in need, dull Faith to prove,
 The wav'ring heart to chide :
 Were pain in Heav'n, 't were pain to Thee,
 I trow, to hide Thyself from me.

By Thine own sorrow on the Cross,
That agonising cry,
Thy sense of that one moment's loss,
When darkness veil'd the sky,
And hid Thy Father's face from Thee :—
Hide not Thy face, O Christ, from me.



THE SACRED NAME.

Palm Sunday.

On the next day much people, that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm-trees, and went forth to meet Him, and cried, Hosanna : Blessed is the King of Israel, that cometh in the name of the Lord.—John xii. 12, 13.



WHEN the sacred Name is spoken,
 Bowèd knee and bended head
 Are the outward sign and token
 That we *feel* what we have said—
 Feel that Jesus, God most holy,
 Tho' unseen, is somewhere nigh,
 And, with reverence deep and lowly,
 Worship as He passes by.

So when He, the Lord, did enter
 His Jerusalem of old,
 Souls and eyes in Him did centre,
 Waves of welcome round Him roll'd :
 And before that lowly Wonder
 Raging hearts grew still and calm,
 While they cast their garments under,
 And His pathway strew'd with palm.

Yet the throng, that now rejoices,
Whose Hosannas rend the sky,
Soon shall shout, with treacherous voices,
Crucify Him, crucify!
They, who lowly now adore Him,
Soon shall fling their insults round,
Mocking, bow the knee before Him,
Scarlet-robed, and thorn-encrown'd.

Therefore, when that Name is spoken,
And with bended head or knee
Thou dost give the outward token
Of thine inward fealty,
Watch, my soul, that every feeling
Be in concord with that sign,
Heart as well as body kneeling,
Thoughts as well as looks divine.



THE FAITHFUL GIFT.

Monday before Easter.

She hath done what she could.—Mark xiv. 8.



HE hath done what she could,
 Her poor all hath expended,
 With ointment most precious
 Her Lord to prepare ;
 ‘ She hath done what she could,’
 And her Lord hath commended
 For His body her love,
 For His burial her care.

The spikenard the worldly
 Would lavish on pleasure,
 The hair that the trifling
 Would deck to deceive,
 The one she pours out
 On her Lord, without measure,
 A robe for His feet
 With the other doth weave.

The thoughtless may wonder,
 The godless may slight her,
 And murmuring ask,
 To what purpose such waste ?

What matter! the Lord
With His love doth requite her,
Her deed on the roll
Of His records hath placed.

The days and the hours
When calm in devotion
She hung on His lips,
Or sat low at His feet,
Come soft o'er her heart
With their tender emotion,
Than beauty more precious,
Than spikenard more sweet.

She knows that those days
Are for ever departed,
She lives in their light,
Tho' her soul be in gloom,
She believes, she can trust,
But still, half broken-hearted,
She hopes in His life,
But prepares for His tomb.

Thus, Lord, give us ever
The grace to watch by Thee,
In sorrow and shade,
As in sunshine and joy;
Our bliss, wheresoever
Thou art, to be nigh Thee,
Our wealth, all we have
For Thy use to employ.

O blest above measure,
If we too may hear Thee
Accept our poor service
Imperfect and rude,
And—marking with favour
The faithful who fear Thee—
This blessing bestow—
They have done what they could.



MEN-PLEASERS.

 Tuesday before Easter.

Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath He done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify Him. And so Pilate, willing to content the people . . . delivered Jesus, when he had scourged Him, to be crucified.—Mark xv. 15.



PROUDLY in his Hall of Judgment,
 There to play his fearful part,
 Sat the Roman Pontius Pilate,
 Clear in head, but cold in heart.

Bound and silent stood before him,
 Meek and sad, the Lord of all,
 Listening to His false accusers,
 In that awful judgment-hall—

Listening to His words perverted,
 All too gentle to complain ;
 Tho' one word had struck them speechless,
 Yet not answering again.

Thousands round, like storm-toss'd ocean,
 Fling their furious rage on high ;
 Shouting, in their wild commotion,
 Crucify Him, crucify !

Wretched man ! tho' passing power
Seem thy little soul to please,
Yet thine inner self doth cower
Under conscience, ill at ease.

Thine own fears, and other's dreaming,
Terrible attendants are ;
Judge—alone in outward seeming—
Thine own Judge is at thy bar.

Vain to soothe that troubled conscience
All thy pleading with the throng ;
While within the battle rages,
Sense of right, and love of wrong.

Vain to wash thine hands, disclaiming
Part in that accursèd day,
Blood is on them, which thy Victim's
Blood alone can wash away.

O my soul ! take hence the measure
Of their misery, who can
Sacrifice their sense of duty
To the wretched fear of man.

Play not with those dread convictions
That would wrest its slave from sin,
Sad to see the refuge-city,
See, but never enter in.

Of all men on earth the poorest
They who know what they should do,
But, thro' vain men-pleasing, cannot
To their own belief be true.

Just enough of night to darken
That pure day in which they live,
Just enough of light to sadden
All the joys that sin can give.



SECRET SIN.

Wednesday before Easter.

I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? See thou to that.—Matt. xxvii. 4.



IS o'er! the last kind deed is done,
The last kind word is spoken,
The last few sands are almost run,
And the last links are broken;
Love's bonds are burst, and he is free
With an enslaving liberty.

He who, admitted near his Lord,
Tended with care parental,
Had seen His deeds, and heard His word,
So loving and so gentle,
Rises, and goes his fearful way
Out into darkness to betray.

All acts of love, all means of grace,
His stubborn soul refuseth,
Self occupies the Saviour's place,
And His best gifts abuseth;
The wretch, thro' wretched love of self,
Betrays his Lord, betrays himself.

Long had he harbour'd secret sin,
And long with truth had trifled ;
Now Satan safely enters in,
And God's own shrine is rifled :
The hands, that long in secret stole,
Now sell his Saviour, and his soul.

By slow degrees the deed was done,
The fetters, that now bound him,
Had, day by day and one by one,
Been surely drawn around him :
He would not burst them when he could,
He could not burst them when he would.

Think not he deem'd Christ's death would be
The end of his pursuing,
Far rather hoped he thus to see
His enemies' undoing ;
He have his silver, they their fall,
His Lord triumphant over all !

Alas ! how little they can know
The end of the beginning,
Who calculate how far to go
Into the ways of sinning :—
Turn to Aceldama, and there
Witness the suicide's despair !

O Saviour ! teach us how to take
Warning from that offender ;
And keep our souls, for Thy dear sake,
To Thee still true and tender ;

Lest, turning wilfully away,
We leave Thy table to betray.

One downward step of early sin
 Indulged in or neglected,
One look of love—our hearts to win
 Back to Thy side—rejected,
May our soul's separation be
Eternally, O God, from Thee.



WATCHING IN GETHSEMANE.

 Thursday before Easter.

Pray that ye enter not into temptation. And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down and prayed.—
 Luke xxii. 40, 41.



ESUS ! my Master ! when I feel
 The world's temptations round me steal,
 When things of sense too much employ
 My heart with their deceptive joy,

When things of faith too little move
 My soul to thoughts and deeds of love,
 I'll turn aside, and keep with Thee
 Watch in that sad Gethsemane.

When—cross'd by cares which Thou hast sent
 In mercy, sadder to prevent,
 Cares which, if rightly understood,
 Must only work me deeper good—
 I, slighting what Thou dost provide,
 Would push the bitter cup aside,
 O give me grace to keep with Thee
 Watch in that sad Gethsemane.

Life's gaudy and unreal glow,
 The littleness of human woe,
 The joys which some so much control,
 They should be payment for a soul ;

The griefs which some so much depress,
As if our *right* were happiness,
Their nothingness we best can see
When look'd on in Gethsemane.

Thy sorrows there alone can prove
The depth of real grief and love ;
Thy lonely and thrice offer'd prayer,
If it were possible, to spare ;
The meekness of that love, which still
To Heav'n subdued Thy human will,
These are the lessons which can be
Best taught us in Gethsemane.

There let us kneel, and ' watch and pray,'
Against that dark and awful day,
When Thou upon the Cross didst give
Thy life, that all the world might live.
If for one moment sin seem slight,
Or our offences few or light,
They'll take their proper form when we
Kneel by Thee in Gethsemane.



THE DARK DAY.

Good Friday.

A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.—Isa. liii. 3.

DAY of loss and day of gain,
 Day of peace and day of pain,
 Thou art come to us again!

Death on thee hath done his worst,
 Hell on thee his gates hath burst,
 God on thee hath been accurst.

Yet the Death, which struck so high,
 Doom'd its very self to die,
 In the hour of victory ;

And the Hell, which mutter'd low
 Triumph at that deed of woe,
 Felt the suicidal blow ;

And the God accurst doth rise,
 In the very hour He dies,
 Over all His enemies.

Mystery for high belief!
How, from depths of guilt and grief,
God doth work for man's relief.

Christ, on the accursèd tree
Bound, to set the sinner free,
Triumphs in His agony.

Hell, whose deadly hate and pride
Heaven its very self defied,
Bows before the Crucified!

Mystery all thought above!
Death the birth of Life to prove!
Hate to be the womb of Love!

Wonder of all wonders known!
Christ upon the Cross alone
Makes the whole world's sins His own!

Horror of all horrors wrought!
Sinful man, whose soul was sought,
Sheds the blood by which he's bought!

Day ashamed a veil doth take,
Earth dismay'd doth reel and quake,
And the very dead awake.

Jesus! Gentle Sufferer! say,
How shall we, this dreadful day,
Near Thee watch, and to Thee pray?

We, whose proneness to forget
Thy dear love on Olivet
Bathed Thy brow with bloody sweat ;—

We, whose sins with awful power,
Like a cloud did o'er Thee lower,
In that God-excluding hour ;—

We, who still in thought and deed
Often hold the bitter reed
To Thee, in Thy time of need ;—

Canst Thou pardon us, and pray,
As for those who on that day
Took Thy precious life away ?

Yes ! Thy Blood is all my plea,
It was shed, and shed for me,
Therefore to Thy Cross I flee.

At Thy feet, in dust and shame,
I dare breathe Thy holy Name,
And a ' great salvation ' claim.

Save me, Saviour ! stoop and take
Pity on my soul, and make
This day bright, for Thy dear sake.



THE SEPULCHRE IN THE GARDEN.

Easter Eve.

In the garden, a new sepulchre.—John xix. 41.

LOWLY kneel and softly tread
 Round the Saviour's Sabbath bed,
 Mourn not, weep not, 'watch and pray,'
 Put all restless thoughts away ;
 Whatsoever grief or strife
 Thou hast ever known in life,
 Bring it to this garden-ground,
 Where His sepulchre is found.

Hath thy youth been fresh and fair,
 Unobscured by cloud or care ?
 Have all precious things of earth,
 Smiled upon thee from thy birth ?
 Come and watch against the day
 When these joys may pass away,
 And in thine own garden-ground
 Some new sepulchre be found.

Is that stain the stain of tears
 Which upon thy cheek appears ?
 Is that long and dreamy stare,
 Fix'd on that one vacant chair—

Are those hush'd and chasten'd ways,
Going softly all thy days—
Proofs that in thy garden-ground
Some new sepulchre is found ?

Come, and on Christ's Sabbath bed
Aching heart and throbbing head
Lay in deep submission down,
For heart's-ease and glorious crown
Shall for both from thence arise,
When the Living Sacrifice,
Breaking from Death's narrow bound,
Makes all earth one garden-ground.

To the waiting soul how blest
That last primal Sabbath-rest,
Coming, as it did, between
Calvary's dark Passion-scene
And the dawning of that day
When all doubtings fled away,
Sharon's bursting Rose was found,
Glory of that garden-ground.

Ere its claim on them expired,
It did all their souls required ;
Shut the world's intrusions out,
Cherish'd faith, and chasten'd doubt,
Kept them from that loving deed
Christ would show He did not need,
By His grave next morning found
Empty in that garden-ground.

Thus, my soul, wait in thy place,
Meekly use all means of grace,
Days of toil, or days of rest,
As God sends them, suit thee best ;
Simply strive to do His will,
Keep self under, and be still,
Though thy struggling heart be found
Yearning toward some garden-ground.

Spices best let love prepare,
Waiting faith, and earnest prayer :
These, in holy rest and calm,
Use thy longings to embalm ;
Lay them at thy Saviour's feet,
Wrap them in His winding-sheet,
And, some morning, they 'll be found
Risen from that garden-ground.



ETERNAL SPRING.

Easter Day.

Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.—Isa. lx. 1.



WAKE, glad soul! awake! awake!
 Thy Lord hath risen long;
 Go to His grave, and with thee take
 Both tuneful heart and song:
 Where Life is waking all around,
 Where Love's sweet voices sing,
 The first bright Blossom may be found
 Of an Eternal Spring.

Yet woman's love, too true and brave
 For guards or night to scare,
 Last at the Cross, first at the grave,
 Found not that Blossom there;
 So often lag our steps behind
 The Lord's preventing grace,
 So often fail our hearts to find
 The beauty of His face.

To Angels' sleepless eyes alone
 Did Heav'n the boon accord,
 Their hands had roll'd away the stone,
 And deck'd their rising Lord;

And still within the solemn shade
Of Death they sat and shone,
To point where lately He was laid,
And tell how He was gone.

Not selfishly their souls enjoyed
The secret which they knew,
Grateful they wait—by Christ employed
To comfort others too :
Words long forgotten to recall,
Faith drooping to revive,
And tell His followers where all
May see His face alive.

O Love! which lightens life's distress,
Love, death cannot destroy ;
O grave! whose very emptiness
To Faith is full of joy :
Let but that Love our hearts supply
From Heaven's Eternal Spring,
Then Grave, where is thy victory ?
And Death, where is thy sting ?

The shade and gloom of life are fled
This Resurrection Day,
Henceforth in Christ are no more dead,
The grave hath no more prey ;
In Christ we live, in Christ we sleep,
In Christ we wake and rise ;
And the sad tears Death makes us weep
He wipes from all our eyes.

And every bird, and every tree,
And every opening flower,
Proclaim His glorious victory,
His Resurrection-power :
The folds are glad, the fields rejoice,
With vernal verdure spread,
The little hills lift up their voice,
And shout that Death is dead.

Then wake, glad heart ! awake ! awake !
And seek thy risen Lord,
Joy in His Resurrection take,
And comfort in His Word ;
And let thy life, thro' all its ways,
One long thanksgiving be,
Its theme of joy, its song of praise,
' Christ died and rose for me.'



ABIDE WITH US.

Monday in Easter Week.

Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.—Luke xxiv. 29.



ABIDE with us,' the shades of eve
Are falling fast around ;
' Far spent ' the day—O do not leave
The souls Thy Love has found !

We lost Thee in an hour of fear,
Thy words of love forgot ;
Once more that blessed Voice we hear—
O Saviour, leave us not !

O leave us not !—tho' slow of heart
To trust Thy plighted word ;
Abide, nor ever more depart,
Abide with us, O Lord !

Alas ! that we should e'er forget
The hope Thy suff'rings gave,
' Thine agony and bloody sweat,'
The Garden, Cross, and Grave ;

Or lose amid their gloom the pure
Perfection of that joy,
No clouds of grief should e'er obscure,
No cross or grave destroy.

But Thou art come to us again ;
Our souls so dull and sad
Thou ' madest soft with drops of rain,'
And now with sunshine glad.

Then O ' abide with us,' nor leave
Those whom Thy Love hath found,
For life is wearing—shades of eve
Are falling fast around.

The solemn joy, the awful fear,
The hallow'd hush of peace,
The consciousness that Thou art near,
We would not these should cease.

They came to us with glad accord
This blessed Easter-tide,
They will ' abide with us,' O Lord,
If Thou with us abide.



THE UPPER CHAMBER.

Tuesday in Easter Week.

The same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.—John xx. 19.



LORD, when my feet would turn away
 From keeping of Thy Holy day
 To worldly joy or care ;
 When secret pleasures of mine own
 Tempt me one moment to disown
 Thy blessed House of Prayer ;

 When that sweet call of Sabbath bells,
 Which on the ear now sinks, now swells,
 Hath fail'd my heart to win ;
 And, with averted soul and eye,
 I pass Thine open portals by,
 When others enter in ;

 Let me remember days of gloom,
 When, gathered in an upper room,
 With closed and guarded door,

Depressed with fears, by foes beset,
Thy broken band of followers met,
In secret to adore.

No solemn pomp of worship theirs,
No bells to call to holy prayers,
No aisles by thousands trod ;
The Church, which was to bear to men
Freedom of soul, enjoyed not then—
Freedom to worship God.

Yet never, in her palmiest days,
Or fairest shrines which love could raise,
Or most melodious choirs,
Rose truer service to the ear
Of Him, who stoops with joy to hear
The prayer which faith inspires.

The beauty of that little room,
The rainbow lights across its gloom,
Were love, and trust, and prayer ;
The glory of that simple spot,
Where gold and frankincense were not,
Was, that their Lord was there.

His presence all their fears subdued,
His words of peace their faith renewed,
No more their souls complain ;
He showed to them His hands and feet,
He shared with them their earthly meat,
And was their own again.

Oh Saviour ! in a world like this
What purer joy, what deeper bliss,
Can faith for mortals win ?
Their joy—Thy presence to adore !
Their bliss—an ever open door !
With grace to enter in.



LOVE'S TENDERNESS.

First Sunday after Easter.

And after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.—John xx. 26.



EW and fleeting days remain,
Christ returns to Heaven again,
Taking up with Him on high
Glorified humanity ;

That which here for us He bore,
Mortals soon shall see no more,
Till the day when to the skies
He descends, and we arise.

Sweet to mark the tender care
All His best lov'd ones share,
To their lowest wants He bends,
'To their weaknesses attends :
Was there one who fail'd and falter'd ?
He shall find His love unalter'd,
And some gentle deed or word
Have from his forgiving Lord !

Still by leaguering foes beset,
Where the first Lord's Day they met,
There the little Church is found,
When the next Lord's Day comes round :
Weeping, watching, waiting, praying,
Wond'ring where their Lord is staying,
Why the constant Friend of old
Now so seldom they behold !

In the midst of hearts and hands
Lifted up in prayer, He stands :
Peace to every soul He brought,
But one doubter chiefly sought,
With His wounded hands and side,
Proof abundant to provide,
And exchange his faithless grief
For the blessings of belief.

Well He knew the human heart
Loth with unbelief to part ;
'T was to help it in its need,
Not to ' break the bruised reed,'
Tenderly each fault reprove,
Then lead back to joy and love,
'T was for this He died for men,
And now seeks His Church again.

Thus His day of sacred rest,
Lately changed, He own'd and blest,
Thus He taught where best to find
Comfort for a doubting mind,

In that holy gathering, where
Waits His Church in earnest prayer,
And His promise is, to meet
All who seek His mercy-seat.

Thus He teaches you and me
Where alone the blame will be,
If, against such tender pleading,
Watchful care, and gentle leading—
If, despite such loving-kindness,
We, in wilfulness and blindness,
Still His Holy Spirit grieve
By refusing to believe.



REQUITED TOIL.

Second Sunday after Easter.

After these things Jesus shewed himself again to His disciples at the sea of Tiberias.—John xxi. 1.



AY, who are these once more afloat,
And toiling in their fishing-boat,
Who, bending to the lab'ring oar,
Pull outward from Tiberias' shore,
And spread their nets upon the main,
And watch all night, but watch in vain?

And who is He upon the beach,
Where bends the shore with silent reach,
Watching, at morning's early dawn,
That net so vainly cast and drawn,
And yet, though it appear so vain,
Bidding them cast and hope again?

They are the children of the Lord,
Who once so freely at His word
Left ship and calling, His to be,
And now, on their accustomed sea,
Such healthful occupation find
As comforts best a troubled mind.

And He who loves them comes to teach
One lesson more, on that lone beach;

How, from rough hand, and hopeful heart,
They never more in life must part,
But baffled oft, must strive again,
When fishing for the souls of men.

In that long night of cheerless toil,
In that one morn's unlook'd-for spoil,
Their trials and their triumphs, all,
Shadow and gleam before them fall ;
They see what *they* must do and bear,
They learn how *God* will answer prayer.

Love reads at once the lesson taught
By the great draught of fishes caught—
Zeal taught by Love to Christ doth flee,
Plung'd fearless in the foaming sea,
Let others draw the net to shore,
His one sole thought is—to adore !

O Saviour ! when on life's dark main
The Gospel net seems cast in vain,
When, through the long and cheerless night,
No souls the fishers' toils requite,
Give them the grace content to be
With this one thought—they toil for Thee.

Some glorious morn the dawn will break
Upon them brightly for Thy sake,
And patient love the past forget
In blessings of a teeming net,
Let down obedient to Thy word,
Ingathering thousands to the Lord.

THE PENITENT.

Third Sunday after Easter.

Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee.—John xxi. 15.

LORD, Thou knowest that I love Thee !
 ‘ Whom have I in Heaven but Thee ?’
 None on earth I prize above Thee :
 O be gracious unto me !

For my heart is sad and broken,
 Sins of old my sorrows move ;
 And I want some kindly token
 Of Thine all-forgiving love.

Sorely have I spent and squander’d
 Precious gifts by Thee bestow’d,
 Heart, and footsteps, both have wander’d
 Often from the narrow road ;
 Heedless of Thy silent finger
 Pointing upward, I have stray’d—
 Where earth-lights delusive linger—
 From the path Thy footsteps made.

Draw me, draw me gently nigh Thee,
 Let me see again Thy face,
 Yes ! tho’ I did once deny Thee,
 And tho’ still my heart can trace

In those eyes the soft dejection,
Slighted love and grief impart,
That sad look, whose hurt affection
Almost broke my coward heart.

Yet forgive, and draw me near Thee,
Tho' it be to probe and prove ;
Tho' it be, alas ! to hear Thee
Doubt and question of my love !
Can *I* wonder, whose denial
Thrice disowned Thee in Thy need,
If Thy Love, with gentle trial,
Three times make my heart to bleed ?

O my Saviour ! from the sorrow
Which I feel at doubt of Thine,
Teach me some faint thought to borrow
Of Thy grief at doubt of mine ;
Show me what it is to grieve Thee,
Or to cloud that loving face ;
Take me back—I'll never leave Thee,
With the help of Thy good grace.

O the bliss of that parental
Watch, which Thou didst o'er me keep ;
O the comfort of that gentle
Restoration—'feed my sheep !'
Three times lost, Thou thrice hast found me,
Three times fallen, thrice restored ;
O how threefold Thou hast bound me
Unto Thee, my loving Lord !

Henceforth, all my life's devotion
I shall deem too poor to prove
With what trembling fond emotion
I repent, and trust, and love :
Thankful even if my falling
May to others warning be,
And Thy gentle kind recalling
Draw some wand'rer back to Thee.



THE FOLLOWER.

Fourth Sunday after Easter.

Follow me.—John xxi. 19.



LORD, to Thy will my anxious soul
Submits, and loves the sweet control;
Fever'd and toss'd with its own fears,
The shelter of Thine arm endears
The weakness, that from self must flee,
And find its strength in following Thee.

I ask for nought but this dear grace—
To hear Thy voice, and see Thy face;
Dark tho' my path in life may prove,
Thy smile of peace, Thy voice of love,
If they my lamp and guide will be,
Are all I need in following Thee.

My peace and safety, well I know,
From faith and not from sense must flow;
Vain hopes and fears disturb the rest
Of the self-led, self-trusting breast;
But now one thought engrosses me,
Saviour! how best to follow Thee.

As those who tremble in the day,
Revisiting their midnight way
Past without danger or alarm
When trusting to some friendly arm,
How would I shudder could I see
What I escape when following Thee !

Alas ! too often I complain,
Imagine ills, and fret at pain,
Wish that the journey home were o'er,
That I might toil and grieve no more,
And with Thee in Thy rest might be,
Instead of ever following Thee.

But instantly rebuk'd I stand,
My times are ever in Thy hand ;
And tho' I cannot follow now,
Yet if thro' grace I keep my vow,
Thou wilt remember Thine to me,
And afterwards I 'll follow Thee.



WAITING ON GOD.

*Fifth Sunday after Easter.**Wait for the promise of the Father.—Acts i. 4.*

ONE lesson more the Church must learn,
 Ere her great Head to Heav'n return,
 To claim His regal state :
 The hardest for the human heart
 To take in good and friendly part,
 That lesson is—to wait.

The little mind of little man
 Frets so within its little span,
 Unless it sees and knows ;
 Restless in its activity,
 It cannot in God's order see
 The progress of repose.

From carelessness to over care,
 Security to dark despair,
 It ever wavers ; till
 It loses that bright golden mean,
 Which lies so blessedly between,
 Whose ' strength is to sit still.'

This lesson Christ His Church would teach,
Ere He had pass'd beyond the reach
 At least of eye or ear ;
He knew how every warning word,
The last on earth they ever heard,
 Would be to memory dear.

On the lone mount, beyond the ken
And bustle of the ways of men,
 His little band is met ;
Never, thro' far-off lonely years,
Thro' toils, and martyrdoms, and tears,
 Will they that hour forget.

He knew their hearts, their love He knew,
Their ardent zeal to dare, and do,
 It was not these He sought ;
But what He wanted was the calm
And childlike waitings which embalm
 All that to God is brought.

No worldly dream of human power
Must come to cloud that glorious hour,
 Or mar the path they trod ;
No vaunting trust in human might
Must tempt them to essay the fight,
 Till strength come down from God.

They must be nothing, and lie still,
Waiting the Father's promise, till—
 Baptised with heavenly flame—

They from Jerusalem go forth,
And east and west, and south and north,
Their glorious Lord proclaim.

Thus in their weakness strength shall be,
And power in their humility,
And glory in their grace ;
Thus, with clean hands, hearts pure and true,
They shall their ' Father's business ' do,
And then behold His face.

So must we ever strive to prove,
In self-denying lowly love,
What we for Christ may be ;
It is not what strong hands can win,
But what meek hearts escape of sin,
That He delights to see.

His Church hath times when she must rise,
And battle with her enemies,
And hold her place and state,
But she hath also seasons when
Stillness becomes her best ; and then
Her glory is—to wait.



THE LINK WITH HEAVEN.

Ascension Day.

Thou art gone up on high, Thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men; yea, even for Thine enemies, that the Lord God might dwell among men.—Psalm lxxviii. 18.

RISE, my soul! to Heaven ascend,
Follow Christ, thy Lord and Friend,
He is gone into the skies,
Follow Him with straining eyes.

Tho' He seem from thee to part,
Follow Him with faithful heart;
Sense may fail, and sight grow dim,
Faith alone can follow Him.

He hath fought and He hath won,
He His glorious work hath done,
He is now gone up on high,
Captive leads captivity;
Taking to the mercy-seat
Pierced hands and weary feet,
Bleeding brow, and wounded side—
Thus returns the Crucified!

Heav'n, tho' earth had made Him mourn,
Stoops to welcome His return;

God's own chariots are at hand,
Twenty thousand near Him stand,
Thousand thousand angels wait
Lowly on His royal state,
Backward angel hands have roll'd
For His entrance gates of gold.

Deep those glorious guards of light
Blush to see that shameful sight,
Horried at human sin,
Blush to let the Conqueror in ;
Him, th' Eternal One, the Holy,
Him, the Saviour meek and lowly,
Stain'd with travail, tears, and toil,
Wounds ! His only seeming spoil !

But therein His glory lies—
Mystery of mysteries !
That despoiled humanity,
Angels wond'ring weep to see,
Is the great Redeemer's crown,
Which triumphant He lays down,
And before His Father's throne
Claims all nations as His own.

He—whose faintest sigh or thought
Legions had around Him brought,
When on earth His petty foes
In their wretched wrath arose—

Comes not now for vengeance pleading,
But for mercy interceding,
And, by His own grief and loss,
Pleads His prayer upon the cross.

Gifts, the best that Heav'n can pour
Out of Its exhaustless store,
Hallow'd days, and happy hours,
Kindly sunshine, gracious showers,
Never more for souls to cease,
Till the blessedness of peace,
Re-uniting sinful men,
Bring them back to God again ;—

These He asks for, these obtains !
These His glories ! these His gains !
'Twas for these His wounded feet
Hasten'd to the mercy-seat,
'Tis for these that there He stands
Holding out His pierced hands,
Earth to save, and Heav'n to move,
Giving back for hatred love.

'Headstone' of the wondrous plan !
Perfect God ! and perfect man !

- In th' ascended Saviour met,
On the throne of judgment set,
Mighty in His power to bless,
Mighty in His tenderness,
All that sinful souls can need,
Man to feel—and God to plead.

THE RETURNING DOVE.

Sunday after Ascension Day.

Because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth ; it is expedient for you that I go away : for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you : but if I depart I will send Him unto you.—John xvi. 6, 7.



SAVIOUR ! Thou hast done much, but we
want more,
We cannot reach Thee where Thou now
art gone ;

Coldly we plead, and heartlessly adore,
Thou art too far above us, Holiest One !

O send us down some earnest that Thy love,
So tried, so proved, thro' absence does not cease ;
We watch, we wait for the returning Dove
To bring us back the olive-branch of peace

The waters *seem* assuaged—but Thy word
Has bid us for Thine own permission stay,
We dare not venture forth, till Thou, O Lord,
Send down Thy Dove to lead us on our way.

Once we could touch Thee, hear Thee, read Thy face,
And the deep meaning of Its tender care,
Thou wert beside us then in every place,
Thou art above us now—O Saviour!—where?

We want Thee as of old, or nearer still,
We want Thee hidden here in every heart,
All time, all space, all thoughts, all souls to fill,
And never more from us or ours to part.

And Thou didst promise Thou wouldst come again,
Nor leave us 'comfortless' on earth to mourn,
And Thou didst go to get good gifts for men,—
Best gift of Heaven! O Saviour Christ! return!

Come—be Thyself 'the Comforter' we need,
All that we feel we want is—Thee alone;
O pardon! if we know not what we plead,
Give us whatever makes Thee most our own,

It cannot grieve The Spirit, if our love
Still long Thy once familiar face to see;
Come on the quivering pinions of the Dove,
As once that Dove came lighting down on Thee.



THE GOLDEN AGE.

Whit-Sunday.

And suddenly there came a sound from Heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.—
Acts ii. 2, 3, 4.



HAT gleam of later times hath e'er resembled
The glory of that Pentecostal day,
When, 'in one place with one accord'
assembled,

Christ's infant Church knelt down, to watch and
pray?

One in the faith and earnest expectation
Of the great promise of all-guiding grace,
One in the bright and blessed revelation
Of God's full love, and reconciled face.

Sudden there came a sound from out of Heaven,
'As of a rushing mighty wind,' which filled
The house; and to its inmates God had given
The grace to do whatever He had willed.

They knelt—how few ! how weak ! yet O how
glorious

In that surpassing unity of faith !

They rose—endowed with power to be victorious
Over all might of sin, and hell, and death.

And ‘tongues like as of fire’ play’d lambent o’er them,
With sacramental promise sealing each,
The presence of their Saviour to restore them,
Kindle with love, and touch with fire their speech.

One tongue alone their mission-work had bounded
To that one soil they had from childhood trod,
But now all nations, in amaze confounded,
Hear them tell forth the wondrous works of God.

From every shore, and clime, and tongue, and nation,
Diverse in speech, tho’ in pursuit the same,
‘Devout men,’ met in that great congregation,
Hear His young Church her Saviour’s love pro-
claim—

Bow’d with her first-fruit off’rings to adore Him,
Faint earnest of the triumphs of His Word,
While angels joy to see her lay before Him
‘Three thousand souls,’ all ‘added to the Lord.’

Where is the glory, once so glad and golden,
That bless’d the Church of God in early days,
Hath He in wrath Himself from her withholden,
Stay’d all her triumphs, hush’d her hymns of
praise ?

Where is the promise of that wide dominion
To be subdued beneath the conquering Cross ?
Where the bright leading of that dove-like pinion,
Which, ever followed, never led to loss ?

We have not, for we ask not, and our sorrow
Will not suffice to bring us back to peace,
Nor ever shall we know a brighter morrow,
Till faith toward God, and love to man increase.

Send down, O Lord, send down Thy Holy Spirit,
To fill our hearts, and lead our steps above,
That we may toil for that which we inherit,
The kingdom of Thy glory and Thy love.

Give us the splendour of those golden ages,
Such unity of heart and faith, that we
May quench with love the battle-fire that rages
In this rude world, 'gainst truth, and peace, and
Thee.



THE BEST GIFTS.

Monday in Whitsun-week.

But covet earnestly the best gifts ; and yet show I unto you a more excellent way.— 1 Cor. xii. 31.



OW glorious in the sacred page
The triumphs of that golden age,
When, in her morning hour,
The Church went forth with might divine,
And giant-like, refresh'd with wine,
Put forth her primal power.

Fresh from her baptism of fire,
Elate with hope and fond desire
She rose, as set her Sun :
Looked to the crown, upreared the Cross,
And never dreamed of let or loss,
But felt the world was won.

Hers was to do, and hers to dare,
Upon her Lord she roll'd the care
He gladly made His own ;
What lay before her here below
Of trials, martyrdom, or woe,
To her was all unknown.

She only sought to lift on high,
And keep, in unstain'd purity,
 The banner which she bore ;
Christ's love exalt, Christ's praise proclaim,
And teach how by no other name
 She could the lost restore.

And thus she conquer'd, far and wide
She glorified the Crucified,
 And by His holy word
Dagons upon their thresholds lay,
And souls, by thousands, day by day,
 Were added to the Lord.

Deem we, in less successful hours,
The secret of these wondrous powers
 Lay simply in the might
Which miracles and tongues could give?
Can these make souls of dead men live,
 Restore blind hearts their sight ?

They were her glory and her grace,
They proved her rights, maintain'd her place,
 Avouch'd her from above ;
But she had better gifts by far,
Which were to these as sun to star—
 The gifts of faith and love.

With these alone God's Church is blest—
O covet them, they are the best
 That e'er adorn'd her prime ;

And they, who use them well below,
A way more excellent shall know,
In His own blessed time.

Had we but faith with Heav'n to plead,
Faith, as a grain of mustard seed,
Simply to trust, and try ;
Pow'r—yea to cast into the sea
A mountain—if such need may be,—
Our Lord would not deny.



THE DEW OF THE SPIRIT.



Tuesday in Whitsun-week.

As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion ; for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.—Ps. cxxxiii. 3.



ALL around the gracious seasons
 Breathe of Heav'n, of grace remind,
 Whispering unto faith such reasons,
 As in Nature's Book they find.

Gloomy winter comes, and teaches
 Unto all its tale of death,
 Spring the Resurrection preaches,
 With its life-reviving breath.

Summer-blooms with glorious promise
 Tell of manhood's opening day,
 Autumn comes, to gather from us
 Golden harvests on life's way.

Gentle dews at evening falling
 Tree, and leaf, and flow'r renew,
 Grateful memory recalling
 Of the Spirit's kindly dew.

God is all about us, guiding
Day by day His perfect plan,
And insensibly providing
For the thousand wants of man.

Stay the dews, or check the showers,
Let the sunshine cease to fall,
Wither hopes, and hearts, and flowers,
Buds and blossoms, wither all.

God is over, God is under,
God is all around our way,
Deeds of mercy, works of wonder,
Wait upon us day by day.

Not alone His angels tend us
With their kind and holy care,
Nature's blessings all befriend us,
Cherish faith, and answer prayer.

Messengers from Heaven, they teach us
All their wise and blessed parts,
If we only let them reach us
Thro' the doors of open hearts.

Thus not only in the shadow
Of His house, where we have knelt,
But in wood and sunny meadow,
Hill or dale, He's found and felt.

Wheresoe'er our footsteps wander,
Grace and Nature teach His love,
Guide us here, and lift us yonder,
Where He dwells in light above.

Holy Spirit! morn and even,
Still and soft as gentle dew,
Drop into our souls from Heaven,
And their languid life renew.

Till each heart with Thee o'erflowing
Bends, like flowers surcharged with rain,
To arise, more glad and glowing,
In the light of Heav'n again.



MYSTERY.

Trinity Sunday.

How can these things be?—John iii. 9.

MIGHTY Father! Blessed Son!
 Holy Spirit! Three in One!
 Evermore Thy will be done!
 Threefold is Thy glorious might,
 Threefold is Thy Name of light,
 Veil'd before our mortal sight.
 Threefold let our praises be,
 Great mysterious One, to Thee,
 Undivided Trinity!

Mighty Father! from the springs
 Of Thy life, all living things
 Thy eternal purpose brings.
 Blessed Son! Incarnate Word!
 Thou by death hast life restored,
 Life, else forfeit to the Lord.
 Holy Spirit! Thou hast moved
 O'er Thy people's hearts, and proved
 The delight of being loved.

Father Everlasting! we
Are so drawn in love to Thee,
Lest we should presuming be,—
Saviour! Thou hast come so near,
So familiar art, and dear,
Lest we should forget to fear,—
Holy Spirit! Sacred Dove!
Life so hangs upon Thy love,
Lest we should unmindful prove,—

Into myst'ry deeper, higher,
Thou dost awfully retire,
Lowest rev'rence to inspire;
And what seemed so near our eyes
Thou dost lift into the skies,
Farther than our sense can rise:
That, within the golden door
Sense and sight must wait before,
Faith may enter, and adore.

Mystery! 'tis all around!
Mystery! but 'Holy ground,'
Where Thy mercy may be found.
Reason proud may turn to Thee,
Ask to understand and see,
Whisper, 'How can these things be?'
Awful and mysterious God!
Have we then so near Thee trod
Still with shoes unhallow'd shod?

Winds around us soft are blowing,—
All can feel, but who are knowing
Whence they come, and whither going?
How the planets, one by one,
Silver moon, and golden sun,
Their perpetual courses run ;
How the buds and blossoms swell,
How the flow'rs, with joyful bell,
Chime out fragrance,—who can tell?

Every hour on earth we find
Things, familiar as the wind,
Yet beyond the human mind :
Something we, from day to day,
Trust and use, yet cannot say,
We can read its secret way :
Holy lessons God doth teach,
Which the inmost soul do reach,
By more subtle paths than speech.

All such deep heart-teachings must
Humble to the very dust
Human pride and vain self-trust :
Till our ignorance doth prove
Handmaid help to Faith and Love,
While they lift the soul above :
And admonish us that more
Than our reason must adore,
When we bow our God before.

O my God ! mine all Thou art !
Take my whole in every part,
Nor my head, without my heart :
Threefold is Thy Love to me,
Threefold let my graces be,
Faith, and Hope, and Charity !
Thus shall best ' Thy will be done,'
Mighty Father ! Blessed Son !
Holy Spirit ! Three in One !



LOVE.

First Sunday after Trinity.

God is love.—1 John iv. 8.

GOD is love,' by Him upholden
 Hang the glorious orbs of light,
 In their language glad and golden
 Speaking to us day and night
 Their great story,
 'God is Love,' and God is Might.

And the teeming earth rejoices
 In that message from above,
 With ten thousand thousand voices
 Telling back from hill and grove
 Her glad story,
 God is Might, and 'God is Love.'

With these anthems of Creation
 Mingling in harmonious strife,
 Christian songs of Christ's salvation
 To the world with blessings rife
 Tell their story,
 'God is Love,' and God is Life.

Thro' that precious Love He sought us
Wand'ring from His holy ways,
With that precious Life He bought us,
Then let all our future days
Tell this story,
Love our life—our lives be praise.

Gladsome is the theme, and glorious,
Praise to Christ our gracious Head,
Christ, the risen Christ, victorious
Death and Hell hath captive led!
Welcome story!
Love is Life—and Death is dead.

Up to Him let each affection
Daily rise, and round Him move,
Our whole lives one Resurrection
To the life of Life above,
Their glad story,
God is Life—and 'God is Love.'



UNREADINESS.

Second Sunday after Trinity.

*Come, for all things are now ready! And they all with one consent
began to make excuse.—Luke xiv. 17, 18.*



AND art Thou ready, Saviour dear!
And is Thy Table spread for me,
But the poor soul that should draw near
Still all unreadiness for Thee?

Hast Thou come down with tender care
Thy weary people's hearts to bless,
And Host, and Feast—dost Thou prepare
A Table in the wilderness?

And still, can dying souls refuse
To take the bliss while yet they may,
With some poor plea their sin excuse,
And cold and heartless turn away?

What is it keeps *me* from Thy side?
Not the world's toil, or grief, or strife!
No constant struggle to provide
Against the needs and storms of life!

Sunshine and calm are overhead,
Plenty and peace are all around,
Abundance, more than 'daily bread,'
Doth thro' Thy Providence abound.

And shall the joy, by Thee bestow'd,
Engross the hearts by right Thine own,
Exalt itself into a God,
And occupy the Saviour's throne?

This pleasant Home in which we live,
These lawns, and glades, and bow'ry trees,
Whose garden-bloom and fragrance give
Joy to the sunbeam and the breeze;

Those herds that in soft evening hours
Come lowing thro' the dewy grass,
Or in the lane, fresh filled with flowers,
Breathe on us perfume, as they pass.

Those fields, with ripening verdure clad,
Prophetic of their golden store;
These hearts, with very pleasure glad
Of mere existence, if no more.

But above all, that holy love
Which makes man's home supremely dear,
Which should uplift his heart above,
But ah! too often holds it here;

That love of husband, wife, or child,
With its sweet words and gentle kiss,—
Which o'er life's bleakness sheds the mild
Calm sunshine of domestic bliss,—

Shall these pure joys whose only light,
Perfect and changeless, is in Thee;
Thus qualify their own delight,
By dimming what should cloudless be?

Teach me my God! the 'better part,'
When I some vain excuse would plead;
What stills not my own anxious heart,
How could it e'er with Thee succeed?

O if the joys bestowed on earth
Shine but to draw our thoughts from Heav'n,
Not only are they little worth,
But better they had ne'er been given.



JOY IN HEAVEN.



Third Sunday after Trinity.

There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.—Luke xv. 10.



OW the spirit oft is moved
 By the sounds of joy on earth,
 Ringing laugh from voice beloved !
 Manly cheer, or childish mirth !

Songs of birds in leafy trees,
 Hum of insects everywhere,
 Joybells coming up the breeze,
 Playing with the evening air :

All, like notes of one full chord,
 Bearing each its proper part,
 Soft and sweet, as loving word,
 Pass into the human heart.

If the joy of earth below
 Be so fair to hear and see ;
 Who of mortal men can know
 What the joy of Heaven must be ?

‘Joy in Heaven,’ where joy alone
In perfection may be found,
Spreading from the glorious throne
Widening circles all around ;

Till throughout remotest space
Each successive circle steals,
With its bright and holy grace,
Into everything that feels.

Sure it is no vain conceit,
But a faith to feeling dear,
That whate’er of soft or sweet
Ever waits around us here,

Is some faint pulsation felt
From the joy of Heav’n above,
That can die not, till it melt
Human hearts to joy and love.

Summer breeze ! ’tis Heav’n’s pure air
Stirr’d above by Angel’s wing !—
Pleasant sound ! ’tis music there,
Echoed from where Angels sing :

‘Indescribable delight !’
That doth oft the heart beguile,
Comes from waving rings of light
Moved by God’s approving smile.

Pleasant thought ! but still more blest
That which we for surety know,
That into the realms of rest
Joy may e'en from mortals flow.

Not our pride, nor our success,
Angels' sympathy may win,
But the tear of heart-distress,
Shed in penitence for sin.

Not, like drops of morning dew,
Jewel-like to distant eyes,
And whose light, on nearer view,
Slowly fades away and dies ;

But, like diamonds in the mine
Of Redemption, seen afar,
And to hearts and eyes divine
Brighter than the evening star.

Such the tears repentance sheds,
When the soul to God is given ;
Dew-drops *here* on drooping heads,
Jewels *there*, and ' Joy in Heaven.'



THE SILENT TEACHER.

Fourth Sunday after Trinity.

Cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.—Luke vi. 42.



WOULD I lead another right?
 Lord I first must walk with Thee:
 Would I help another's sight?
 Mine from blemish must be free.

Would I wander all around
 Seeking those who Godless roam?
 I must first myself be found—
 'Charity begins at home!'

Would I others' vineyards keep,
 Warn of tares while men have slept?
 I must rouse myself from sleep,
 My own vineyard must be kept.

They, who struggle to be free
 From the faith they own but fear,
 Oft believe the truths they *see*,
 While rejecting those they *bear*.

Self-accusing look or word
Better pleads than lofty speech,
In the heart's deep silence heard
Argument could never reach.

He—who his own will subdues
To whatever God requires,
Who can cheerfully refuse
All his own untoward desires,—

He—who can unruffled bear
Bitter speech and taunt unkind,
Bow to grief, or bend to care,
Gently with submissive mind,—

He—who, thro' the snares of earth
That around his pathway lie,
Mindful of his higher birth,
Presses on with Heav'nward eye,—

Preaches sermons to the heart,
Which the head would little heed,
If, tho' with consummate art,
Eloquence alone should plead.

Would I therefore guide another ?
I must walk myself aright :
Would I save an erring brother
From the mote that dims his sight ?

I must honest be, and careful
Not about *his* eye alone,
But, with spirit prompt and prayerful,
Pluck the beam out of mine own.

UNCONSCIOUS HELPERS.

Fifth Sunday after Trinity.

And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?—1 Pet. iii. 13.



WITH what bright and holy charm
 Christian life is here endued !
 Nought on earth can vex, or harm
 Followers of the thing that's good.

For, tho' from the lot of all
 No exemption they can claim,
 But disease and death must fall
 Upon good and bad the same :—

Still there is a joy, that glows
 Thro' the Christian's inmost soul,
 Which the worldling little knows,
 And the world can less control :—

Which, above the cares of life,
 Lifts him into calm and peace,
 Keeps him tranquil in the strife
 Which, he knows, must shortly cease :—

Shows a meaning, and an end,
In the training of his heart ;
Draws him nearer to a Friend,
From Whom nought but sin can part.

Even they, who think they harm
With their poor and spiteful hate,
Only work a deeper charm
In the earnest Christian's fate ;

Helpers in Love's wondrous plan,
Though unconscious and accurst,
They a holier happier man
Leave him, when they've done their worst.

Turning his sad eyes within,
Showing him God's meaning there,
Some unknown unconquer'd sin,
Which affliction has laid bare.

Thus all things are for the best,
He by hindrances doth rise ;
Hides his secret in his breast,
Passes upward to the skies.

Mystic secret ! far more worth
Than the sage's charm of old,
Turning all the dross of earth
Into Sanctuary gold.

WAKEN'D MEMORIES.

Sixth Sunday after Trinity.

Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee ; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way ; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.—Matt. v. 23, 24.



OW solemn, Lord, the days that find
 Thy children at thine altar kneeling !
 How life's whole dream comes o'er the mind
 In that one hour of faith and feeling !

Long bygone years of guilt and grace
 Come crowding painfully before us,
 When the deep shadows of Thy face
 So calm, so awful, settle o'er us.

Things long forgotten then come back,
 As tho' but yesterday we did them ;
 They will not leave the well-worn track
 Of Memory, for all we bid them.

We thought them buried, or when done
 They little moved us, then light-hearted,
 But now they rise up one by one
 Like ghosts of enemies departed.

We see them in their real light,
Stript of the veil once thrown around them,
All bare and naked in Thy sight
Our startled consciences have found them.

Some angry word, some thought unclean,
Some act, some feeling of unkindness,
Something the world had never seen,
Which we pass'd o'er in passion's blindness :

They come their sure revenge to take,
And spoil that hour of holy gladness
We little cared for, when we brake
Thy laws in such unmeaning madness.

Yet better far they now should come,
And lead us back to such repentance,
As may, thro' Christ, avert the doom
Of Thy dread Heav'n-excluding sentence.

Better they vex with present grief,
Than ambush'd lie against the morrow,
And come when there is no relief
To shelter us from endless sorrow.

One moment now, with God well spent,
Of real earnest soul-returning,
Were worth a life-time of well-meant
But aimless, fruitless, Godless yearning.

Worthless the richest offering
With which unhallow'd hearts adore Him,
And vile the fairest gift we bring,
If laid with unclean hands before Him.

THE BEST OFFERINGS.

Seventh Sunday after Trinity.

Neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing.—2 Sam. xxiv. 24.

LORD! in all I offer Thee
 Let this rule my guidance be,
 It must cost me loss or pain,
 Else Thou wilt not deem it gain.

'Tis not meet that first my wealth,
 Time and talents, heart and health,
 Should be all on self bestow'd,
 Thence to overflow to God.

Not the refuse of my field,
 Nor the worst my flock may yield,
 Are the offerings I should bring
 To the great and glorious King:

Rather be my gifts supplied
 Out of luxuries denied:
 Out of pleasures I *might* take,
 But refuse for Jesus' sake.

Angels cannot see in gold
Beauty such as men behold,
In their eyes its precious part
Is its trial of the heart.

O how often it has proved,
Whether God or self be loved,
And, when doubtful hung the scale,
Turn'd the beam, and told the tale.

Tho' the rich may freely pour
Wealth from their abounding store,
Time there was, when in God's sight
Dearer proved the widow's mite.

God alone the value knows
Of the gift the hand bestows,
And, tho' He that gift may use,
We the giver's grace may lose.

Earth should from her pattern, Heav'n,
Take the bright example giv'n,
Where, upon God's altar lies
What *He* deemed a sacrifice :

Not the lowest that could show
Sympathy with human woe,
But the highest He could give,
His own life that man should live.

Lord ! let such the model be
Of my offerings to Thee,
And the spring my heart to move
Thine unutterable love.

WORK IN US.

Eighth Sunday after Trinity.

Heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ : if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.—Rom. viii. 17.



WORK in me, Lord, Thy wondrous will,
 Only let me be meek and still,
 Let me not even think of Thee,
 That thus this should, or should not be,
 Content, whate'er my lot may prove,
 If it be fashion'd by Thy love.

Were I mine own, then I might rest
 Pleased with the things which pleased me best,
 Were I an angel, I might try
 To pass the teasing trouble by,
 Or, were I free from sinful stain,
 Might deem all trials needless pain.

But being Thine—a mortal too,
 Sinful in all I think or do,
 Let me rejoice, that One so high
 Shrinks not from one so vile as I,
 But having died to save my soul
 Still takes the trouble of control.

EVER NIGH.

Ninth Sunday after Trinity.

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man : but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able ; but will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.—1 Cor. x. 13.



OD of Truth, tho' Thy hand
Oft doth try me,
God of love, Thou dost stand
Ever nigh me.

Not a pang Thou dost send
But to prove me,
And draw near to the Friend
Who doth love me.

In Thine arm's sweet constraint
Thou dost hold me,
To Thy heart, when I faint,
Thou dost fold me.

When I fret at some pain,
Thou dost teach me
How, thro' grief, every gain
Best can reach me.

When my strength, all decay'd,
Cannot bear it,
Thou dost come to mine aid
And dost share it.

Thro' the struggle and strife
Thou dost lead me,
With the bread of Thy life
Thou dost feed me :

Thus drawing to Thee
Daily nearer,
Thy love is to me
Daily dearer.

I would not exchange
Even sadness,
For all the free range
Of life's gladness ;

With the fear, that in joy
I might let Thee
My heart less employ,
Or forget Thee.

I ask not for grief,
But still grieve me,
If Thy only relief
Be, to leave me.

Better far, round about
Me Thy sorrow,
Than to joy wake without
Thee, to-morrow.

For no hand but Thine own
Safely frees us,
One escape, one alone,
'Tis in Jesus !



PRECIOUS TEARS.

Tenth Sunday after Trinity.

And when He was come near, He beheld the city and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes.—Luke xix. 41, 42.



PEACEFUL lay the doomèd city

In the evening's golden air,

Little cause for grief or pity

Men could see around it there :

Waving palms, and shouting voices

Lately thro' its streets had swept,

With Hosannas still rejoices

All the air, but — 'Jesus wept.'

Busy thousands, coming, going,

Meeting, passing, one by one,

All intent, but little knowing

What they seek, or what they shun ;

Some—alone of pleasure dreaming—

Woke and laugh'd, lay down and slept,

Others planning, sinning, scheming,

Still toil'd on, but — 'Jesus wept.'

Little reck'd they then of sorrow,
Deep the Temple stones were laid,
Little thought they of a morrow
Soon to see its glory fade.
Yet, tho' light seem'd round *them* shining,
Slowly up the Temple crept
Shadows of their day declining ;
Jesus saw, and—' Jesus wept,'

For He saw that hour of madness
When they flung their joy away,
Fear, and famine, siege, and sadness,
All at no far distant day :
Then a ' scatter'd peelèd nation '—
While the fox and vulture kept
Darkling watch of desolation
O'er those stones, and—' Jesus wept.'

Often thus, when Pleasure sees us
Flaunting on in dreamy pride,
Near us stands the gentle Jesus,
Weeps and watches by our side :
Tho' the heart to man dissembles,
He can fathom all its deeps,
He can see how conscience trembles,
Tho' we smile, and—Jesus weeps.

Weeps for precious souls, pursuing
Such a sad and downward way,
Which must end in their undoing,
Bring what present joy it may :

While the tide of human passion
On through time so darkly sweeps,
And, in old accustom'd fashion,
Man will sin, while—Jesus weeps.

O, if there be joy in Heaven
When one soul—by grace restored—
Pleads the promise Love hath given,
And—repentant—seeks the Lord :
From such wilfulness and blindness
Lord do Thou Thy children keep,
As, despite His loving-kindness,
Makes the gentle Jesus weep.



THE PENITENT.

Eleventh Sunday after Trinity.

God be merciful to me a sinner.—Luke xviii. 13.

INFUL, sighing to be blest,
 Bound, and longing to be free,
 Weary, waiting for my rest,
 ‘God be merciful to me!’

Holiness! I’ve none to plead,
 Sinfulness in all I see;
 I can only bring my need,
 ‘God be merciful to me!’

Broken heart, and downcast eyes,
 Dare not lift themselves to Thee,
 Yet Thou canst interpret sighs,
 ‘God be merciful to me!’

From this sinful heart of mine
 To Thy bosom I would flee,
 I am not mine own, but Thine,
 ‘God be merciful to me!’

There is One beside the Throne,
And my only hope and plea
Are in Him, and Him alone,
‘God be merciful to me!’

He my cause will undertake,
My Interpreter will be,
He’s my all—and for His sake
‘God be merciful to me!’



THE SENSELESS SOUL.

Twelfth Sunday after Trinity.

*And looking up to heaven, He sighed, and saith unto him Ephphatha;
that is, Be opened.—Mark vii. 34.*



WHEN the Summer Morning breaking
Calls to birds and boughs and breeze,
And the breath of their awaking
Whispers through the tops of trees,
(Day's first footsteps, soft and lightsome,
Falling on the ravish'd ear,)
O how perfectly delightful
Simply to sit still, and hear.

When the Summer Evening closing,
In the shade which twilight makes,
Heart on heart in love reposing,
Heart with heart communion takes ;
Pouring out, with boundless measure,
Thoughts and feelings each to each ;
O how priceless is the pleasure
Of the blessed power of speech !

Thoughtful souls, while grateful musing,
Cannot fail in such employ
To recall, Whose gifts they're using
In those tranquil hours of joy ;

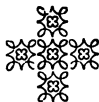
Naught on earth by right possessing,
All thro' tender mercies come ;
'Tis alone through God's good blessing
We are neither deaf nor dumb.

Yet on mortals so affected
We more pity could not take,
Than the Angels feel, dejected
For our desolation's sake :
They a world of beauty round us
Watch, with wond'ring eye and ear,
Tho' its joy hath never found us,
And its voice we cannot hear.

Light and love in mazes moving,
Pulses, beating from the heart
Of the Father, the All-loving,
Searching life thro' every part :
If we would but let them reach us,
Sweeter are than aught that dies,
If we would but let them teach us—
Might prepare us for the skies.

God is ever near us, guiding
By unseen but certain ways,
In His Providence providing
Fires for nights, and clouds for days :
Yet we feel not we are near Him,
With Him no communion hold,
Speak not to Him, do not hear Him,
Love so dead, and Faith so cold.

Blessed Saviour! lay Thy finger
Upon every ear and tongue,
Till, in one Love's music linger,
By the other praise be sung:
Speak the word, 'twill draw us near Thee,
With Thy touch our silence break,
Make the heart that's deaf to hear Thee,
And the tongue that's dumb to speak.



MY NEIGHBOUR.

Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity.

Who is my neighbour?—Luke x. 29.



WHO is my neighbour?' do I ask?
The answer is in every task
Of love, that on the common way
Of life lies round us day by day.

Whatever fellow-man can plead
The brotherhood of grief or need,
The Christian's heart admits the call,
He is the neighbour of us all.

He need not prove the tie of race,
Of creed, of parish, or of place,
He is a man, he is in grief,
And we can give, and owe relief.

Let Priest or Levite pass him by
With solemn but averted eye,
No rule or order could approve
Him who would slight one deed of love.

Religion pure and undefiled
Seeks widow'd heart, and orphan child,
Least spotted by the world where e'er,
For Jesus' sake it dries a tear.

Tho' poor in gold and silver, still
If rich in love and kindly will
We do our best the tend'rest way,
Then we do all that mortals may.

To change our course, give up our ease,
Our pleasure lose that we may please ;
That we may soothe another's woe
To make our *poverty* o'erflow ;—

Not when we feel in fervent mood,
'The luxury of doing good ;'
But when, excitement's impulse gone,
We still for conscience' sake go on ;—

This is the neighbour-love of Heav'n,
The love which God to man hath giv'n ;
The love which man to man must give,
If he with God in Heav'n would live.

God's neighbour was the creature He
Found in the most extremity ;
Man's heart must *feel* God's wondrous plan,
If man would neighbour be to man.

INGRATITUDE.

Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity.

Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God save this stranger.—
 Luke xvii. 17, 18.

THERE are ten at the feet of the Saviour,
 In wearisome sickness they pine,
 They are whole, but is this their behaviour!
 ‘Ten cleansèd!—but where are the nine?’

They came all one sorrow confessing,
 They knelt with one prayer at His shrine,
 He sent them all back with one blessing,
 ‘Ten cleansèd!—but where are the nine?’

They were one in the season of danger,
 How many own Mercy divine?
 Only one!—and that one is a ‘stranger!’
 ‘Ten cleansèd!—but where are the nine?’

O Saviour! how often in sadness
 Our steps to Thine altar incline,
 But return not in sunshine and gladness,
 ‘Ten cleansèd!—but where are the nine?’

We shrink from the pain of displeasure,
We heed not its loving design ;
All we want seems the freedom of leisure,
‘ Ten cleansèd !—but where are the nine ? ’

The vows—that in sickness or sorrow
Engaged us tenfold to be Thine—
Will they live thro’ the joy of to-morrow ?
‘ Ten cleansèd !—but where are the nine ? ’

Better far our afflictions remaining,
If grace with the chast’ning combine,
Than to call forth Thy gentle complaining,
‘ Ten cleansèd !—but where are the nine ! ’



FIELD PREACHERS.

Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity.

Consider the lilies of the field.—Matt. vi. 28.



WHEN care on the heart would lay hold,
 And fears as to silver and gold
 Awaken some dread
 About life's Daily bread,—
 Behold ye the fowls of the air :
 They sow not, nor yet do they reap,
 No stores for the future they keep,
 Yet God all their need
 With His bounty doth feed,—
 Let them teach you to trust in His care.

When the garments, whose presence proclaim
 At the best but our sin and our shame,
 With their pomp and their pride
 Our souls would misguide,—

‘Consider the lilies of the field ;’
 They toil not, nor yet do they spin ;
 And still for himself who can win
 A garment so fair,
 With perfume so rare ?
 ‘Consider the lilies of the field.’

When the wisdom that rises from earth
By thy heart hath been found little worth,
And teachings of Love
Thou dost seek from above,—

‘Consider the lilies of the field:’
Their beauty and perfume will reach
Farther into thy soul than could speech,
From each bell, and each leaf,
Speaks thy God to thy grief:

‘Consider the lilies of the field.’

They are teachers so gentle and lowly
And—by Christ thus ordain’d—are so holy,
We cannot refuse
Their instruction to use,

But to God speaking by them must yield:
They will find out the way to the heart,
They will guide it with heavenly art;
How mystic the powers
Vouchsafed to God’s flowers!

‘Consider the lilies of the field!’



LOVE OF CHRIST.

Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity.

The love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.—Eph. iii. 19.

LOVE of Christ which passeth knowledge,
That is what I long for most,
Till I feel that I possess it,
Every hour of time is lost :

I have but its cold resemblance,
All the life of Life is dead,
If within my heart I feel not
That which plays around my head.

I can see and understand it,
And my tongue hath often told
Others of its priceless beauty,
Still my heart seems dead and cold :
I must know it, I must feel it,
More alas than now I do,
Else devotion's simplest feelings
Soon themselves may seem untrue.

Deeper, higher, fuller teachings,
Than the lips of man can give,
Must be mine, or else I have not
More than the mere name to live.

Just like one to whom, while sleeping,
Shadows all so real seem ;
But who finds, upon awaking,
It has only been a dream.

What I want—is something real,
More than man to man can tell,
Substance of the fair ideal,
Christ within my heart to dwell !
That abiding, deep experience,
Which no change or chance can move,
Of *their* blessing—who are settled,
Rooted, grounded in His Love :—

Till my heart, in large communion
With all saints, doth comprehend
Breadth, length, depth, and height eternal
Of a Love, that knows no end :
' Love of Christ which passeth knowledge !'
Let me from that well-spring drink ;
Fill me Father with its fulness,
More than I can ask or think.



THE SABBATH.

Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity.

The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath : therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath. — Mark ii. 27, 29 ; and ‘ the Gospel.’



HOLY Sabbath day !

Full of the purest bliss !
What treasure on life's way
Find we so fair as this ?

Thou wert to God a rest,
Thou art a rest to man ;
And they who know thee best
Hallow thee all they can.

Like little Isles of Heaven
Scatter'd thro' life's rough sea,
All round about storm-driven,
All calm and still on thee.

Like Eden-spots on earth,
Where curse hath never been,
Which dews of Heavenly birth
Keep ever pure and green.

Foot-prints—which mark, thro' time,
Where down its wastes have trod—
From old Creation's Prime,—
The footsteps of our God !

Sweet day of holy calm !
With Heavenly sunshine bright !
Whose very air is balm
To those who use thee right.

The body, toil'd and worn
With work-day strife and care,
Doth unto thee return,
And finds refreshment there.

The anxious mind o'er-wrought—
To save the precious store—
Lays down its load of thought
Beside thy golden door !

The heart whose love would die
Crush'd out by toil for gain,
Finds home beneath thy sky,
And feels and loves again.

Were there no soul in man,
Had he no hope above,
This blessed Sabbath-plan
Would even then be love.

The wear and tear of life
Thus for awhile would cease,
Thus for awhile its strife
Give way to rest and peace.

And he would longer hold
That which he loves so well,
And with his gods of gold
On earth would longer dwell.

But, for th' eternal soul!
Sweet day! what gain thou art!
Until we reach thee whole,
O what a precious part!

Until we reach the bliss
Of worlds beyond the skies,
How dost thou colour this
With their immortal dyes!

The world is hush'd—the din
Of work-day life is o'er,
The sights and sounds of sin
Distract the sense no more.

The tide of life is set
To quiet haunts of prayer,
We for awhile forget
The rushing tide of care.

We hear the blessed Word,
We bend our knees, and pray,
Our inmost souls are stirred,
We tremble and obey.

Our daily sins we mourn,
Confess, and are forgiven,
In penitence return,
And we are nearer Heaven !

The Bread of Life we break,
Feed on that ' heav'nly food :'
The Cup of Life we take,
Are strengthen'd and renew'd.

O how such days help on
Along the Heavenly road,
Steps upward—one by one—
Into the rest of God.

Sweet Sabbath ! still the same
As in the days of old,
Not lost, because Christ's Name
Is stamp'd upon thy gold.

With jealous care my heart
Watches, lest time deface
The very smallest part
Of thine accustomed grace.

Freedom! I love it not!
If this its meaning be,
That Christian days have brought
Freedom to lower thee.

Thy name we need not lose,
Because thou didst array
Thyself in brighter hues,
Becoming 'the Lord's Day.'

Both names are dear and blest,
In each a meaning lies,
From making—God did rest,
In saving—Christ did rise.

As warp and woof enfold,
God weaves in one the two—
The strictness of the Old!
The freedom of the New!



HIGHER, HIGHER.

Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity.

Blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.—1 Cor. i. 9.

HIGHER! higher to aspire!
 That is all my soul's desire,
 Nearer to the Light and Love
 In which saints and angels move,
 Nearer to the Glorious Throne,
 And to Him who sits thereon,
 To perfection nigher, nigher
 To my Saviour, higher! higher!

Higher! higher! every thought
 More into His presence brought!
 Every passion, every feeling,
 More His inner Life revealing,
 Less of self from hour to hour,
 More of faith's transforming power,
 Yearnings Heavenward that aspire
 Unto Jesus, higher! higher!

Higher! higher! till at length
 Passing on from strength to strength,
 Pressing up from grace to grace,
 I behold that long'd-for Face,

Which is daily o'er me leaning,
With Its deep and tender meaning,
And doth into light retire,
But to lead me higher, higher !

Higher, into Heavenly air,
On the wings of Faith and Prayer,
Let my aspirations rise,
Like the lark, into the skies,
Singing, in her shade of light,
Not unheard, tho' out of sight,
Upon wings, which never tire,
Rising ever higher! higher!

Higher! higher, Lord! the fire
Of my full, and fond desire,
Mingled with Thine altar flame,
Rising in Thy sacred Name,
Tho' by earth-winds tost and driven,
Ever let it point to Heaven,
Never, never to expire,
Till it lift me higher! higher!

Higher, higher on thro' life,
More above its storm and strife ;
Every day I'm older growing,
Less of earth's distractions knowing,
With a purer, freer heart,
Ready—at Thy call—to part
From its dearest ties, and nigher
Rise to Jesus—higher! higher!

FAITH FOR OTHERS.

Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity.

And Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy ; Son, be of good cheer ; thy sins be forgiven thee.—Matt. ix. 2.

HOW often those, most dearly loved,
 Seem to be all too far removed
 Beyond affection's reach ;
 We cannot help them in their grief,
 We cannot bring them the relief
 Of kindly look or speech.

We know they suffer—and we fain
 Would bear some portion of their pain,
 Or cheer them on their way ;
 But either distance lies between,
 Or colder cause may intervene,
 All proofs of love to stay.

Some are on beds of sickness laid,
 And some in disappointment's shade,
 Life's early visions mourn ;
 Some have long left the narrow road,
 And will not seek ' the Way ' to God
 By which they may return.

Is there no pathway that will lead
Our hearts to theirs in time of need,
 No secret, by which we—
Tho' wanting outward means to prove
The depth and fervour of our love—
 Their comforters may be?

Go read the Gospel, and behold
The palsied sufferer of old
 Borne by the faithful four,
Who thro' the roof an entrance found
To Jesus, which the throng around
 Denied them at the door.

There learn what faith and love can do,
When they to God and man are true,
 And how that God approves
The deep devotion which would share
The burden of another's care,
 And ever trusts and loves.

'Their faith' our true and loving Lord
Left upon record in His Word,
 All drooping souls to cheer,—
To teach us how the trusting heart,
If it will only do its part,
 Need never doubt nor fear.

Then is there one, whom thy fond soul
From waywardness cannot control,
 In sickness cannot tend?

One, who in sorrow or in sin,
Cannot, or will not let thee in,
To be his heart's dear friend?

Faint not, and fail not, only try,—
Since there is no extremity
For thy dear Lord too great,
Only be earnest, and in proof—
Denied the door—break up the roof,
And on thy Saviour wait.

He may not in His mercy grant
The very thing you ask or want,—
Still, in this comfort rest—
His Power, His Wisdom, and His Love
In bright and boundless concord move,
He does the thing that's best.



THE WEDDING GARMENT.

Twentieth Sunday after Trinity.

Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment ? —
Matt. xxii. 12.



FROM Bethlehem to Calvary,
 One seamless robe He wove ;
 Its warp was human suffering,
 Its woof Eternal Love.

And He, who wore it, to His Spouse
 Bequeathed it when He died ;
 ' A wedding garment ' to adorn
 The beauty of the Bride :

That she might fair and spotless stand,
 Before her Bridegroom's sight,
 Rob'd in ' the righteousness of Saints,'
 ' Fine linen, clean and white.'

The Supper of the Lamb is laid,
 And I am summoned there ;
 How can I for so great a feast
 My ' filthy rags ' prepare ?

How can I meet my Lord and King,
How for His table dress,
Deck'd in so poor and vile a thing,
As my best righteousness ?

The Heavens are in His sight unclean,
His angels are not clear
From charge of folly,—how dare I
Before my Lord appear ?

Skins of the primal sacrifice
Our primal parents clad !
The wedding garment of the Lamb
Makes His redeem'd ones glad !

Fond soul ! the Love, that could provide
So rich a feast for thee,
Can make thee, with Christ's seamless robe,
What guest of Christ should be.

He that His own Son sparèd not
From death, that we might live,
How shall He not with Him, to us
All things as freely give ?

What is the garment to the feast ?
Or to His kindly call ?
He, for thy most, and for thy least,
Is thy great ' All in All.'

TRUST.

Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity.

Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.

John iv. 48.

THE simple trust, that can confide
 All troubles to the Lord,
 And ask for nothing else, beside
 The warrant of His Word :

That no desire beyond it knows,
 No sign or wonder craves,
 This is the trust that peace bestows,
 And this the faith that saves.

The Syrian lord despised of old
 The Prophet's simple way :
 Change but the names, the tale is told
 Of thousands every day.

Like teaching at the Saviour's knee
 The Jewish lord received,
 Doubt and distress when he would *see*,
 But joy when he *believed*.

Thus ever on thro' life we find
To trust, O Lord, is best :
Who 'serve Thee with a quiet mind,'
Have in Thy service rest.

Their outward troubles may not cease,
But this their joy shall be,
'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace,
Whose mind is stay'd on Thee.'



FORGIVENESS.

Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity.

Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him ? till seven times ? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times ; but, Until seventy times seven.—Matt. xviii. 21, 22.



ORD ! how oft shall I forgive ?

O my soul ! dost thou not live

Every day, and every hour,

On thy Father's Love, and Power,

Still vouchsafed thee, tho' with sin

Days will end, as days begin ;

Life, with all in life bestow'd,

Justly forfeited to God ?

Count the moments as they fly,

Sunbeams floating in the sky ;

Smiles of morning's golden hours,

Bright with breathing bloom of flowers ;

Quivering shadows of the trees,

Playing between sun and breeze ;

Blessed things of earth and air,

That surround thee everywhere.

Count the pulses of thy heart,
Search thro' memory every part,
All the thousand nameless ways,
In which God, thro' all thy days,
Hath thy life sustained and blest,
Giving thee the thing that's best,
Tho' alas ! that life has proved
All unworthy to be loved :—

When thou hast the sum of all
Blessings, that uncounted fall
Round thy path, the light and love
Waiting on thee from above,
All by boundless Mercy brought,
Into judgment ent'ring not ;
Thou hast some reply from Heav'n
How offenders are forgiven.

Then my soul ! be this thy law,—
For each breath, which thou dost draw,
Of God's mercy full and free,
Let thy love outbreathed be ;
And, as with each Heav'n-sent gale
Thou forgiveness dost inhale,
Let thy heart breathe out again
Kindness to thy fellow-men.



THOUGHTS IN HEAVEN.



Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity.

For our conversation is in Heaven.—Phil. iii. 20.



WE walk on earth—and to its ways
Our time and thoughts are given,
Yet, amid all its busiest days,
Our hearts may be in Heav'n.

Nothing so lightens the dull load
Life's urgent claims impose,
As close communion with our God:
It is our best repose.

When vex'd with ills, which we despair
To baffle, or control,
The lifting of the heart in prayer
Sheds sunshine on the soul.

When disappointed in the love
We lean'd on too secure,
What joy it is to look above,
And feel—one Friend is sure!

When, wearied with life's ebb and flow,
We for 'still waters' sigh;
O how it sweetens change below
To think of rest on high!

Thus we in peace our souls possess,
Tho' all around be fear,
Full of the blessed consciousness
That Heav'n is sure, and near.

Dark clouds may o'er us threatening stand,
We can sing on, and smile,
The sunshine of the sunless land
Lies round us all the while.

We can bear any cross, or grief,
If, with their gloom, be given
This one sweet secret of relief,
To keep our thoughts in Heav'n.



THE TOUCH OF FAITH.

Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity.

Be of good comfort ; thy faith hath made thee whole.—Matt. ix. 22.



WHEN, by the busy crowd of life
Too often pressed and thronged,
And in their rude and selfish strife
Both overlooked and wronged ;

How sweet to know, Faith's lightest touch
The watchful Saviour feels,
And healing, in reply to such,
Into the suff'rer steals.

Oft thro' the world we smoothly go
Hiding some secret care,
Our nearest, dearest, may not know,
Which God alone can share.

We mingle with the busy throng,
They pass unheeding by ;
They bear us in their tide along,—
We commune with the sky.

FRIENDS may mistake, or TOES may sigh,
Thyself not seem to see,
One touch of Faith, however light,
Will find its way to Thee.

And Thou wilt give, when sorrow pleads,
'Good comfort' to the soul,
The healing it so sorely needs,
The Faith which makes it whole.



THE PROVIDENCE OF LOVE.

Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity.

Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

John vi. 12.



HE God, who made the silver stars,
And hung them with such care,
The little insects made and keeps,
That fill the evening air.

The forests lift their heads on high,
Obedient to His call ;
Without His knowledge, and His will,
A sparrow cannot fall.

There's nought on earth so small or mean
To His all-seeing eye,
But hath its purpose, and its use,
Whether it live or die.

The very leaves, that Autumn sheds,
Nourish the hidden root,
In Spring-time to arise again,
In foliage, flowers, and fruit.

There is no needless loss or waste
In all His wondrous plan,
One lesson, amid many more,
God ever teaches man.

So, when five thousand once were fed,
At but one blessing's cost,
Th' Almighty was all-careful too,
That nothing should be lost.

'Twelve baskets full of fragments,' left
The miracle to prove,
Were gather'd up, to teach mankind
The Providence of love.

So thou, my soul! with careful step
Follow thy leading Lord,
The broken fragments 'gather up'
Of every deed and word.

From the Great Master's table dropt,
One crumb may comfort be,
Where thousands have been fed before,
Something is left for thee.

Use all committed to thy care,
With liberal hand and heart;
But waste not, thro' improvidence,
The very smallest part.

Thy time, thy talents, health, and wealth,
Were all by Heaven bestowed,
To be made useful here for man,
Then reckoned for with God.

DOMESTIC CARE.

St. Andrew's Day.

One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus.—John i. 40, 41, 42.



HAT day in all the year than this
 More meet, to bring domestic bliss
 In praise before the Lord?
 Or, if we have domestic care,
 To lay it before God in prayer,
 And search His answering Word?

We think of one, this blessed day,
 Who followed Christ without delay,
 And, full of holy fear,
 First his own brother Simon sought,
 And him to Jesus meekly brought,
 In brotherhood more dear.

The youthful convert, fain to prove
 The blessings of his new-found love,
 First seeks his own abode;

And the dear brother of his heart
Persuades to choose the better part,
And give himself to God.

No triumphs of maturer years,
Won for the Cross in toil and tears,
Will ever seem so fair,
As that one gain—a brother found !
And doubly, as a brother, bound
His new-born bliss to share.

Are there for us some brethren dear,
Near to our hearts, but not so near
To God as they should be ?
For whom we know no peace, or rest,
Until they choose the thing that's best,
And Christ's salvation see ?

Or are there those, whom we have borne
Upon our hearts, till their return
To Him, from Whom they strayed,
Has been to prayer the best reply,
The Saviour's tenderest sympathy
In mercy could have made ?

Then let us come, and one and all
Use this glad Christian festival,
For special prayer and praise ;
Prayer for the lost to be restored,
Praise for the loved ones, whom the Lord
Hath brought back to His ways.

And, as the rolling year brings round
The mem'ry of some lost one found,
Some loved one gone astray ;
Let each domestic grief, or joy,
Our heart's best Faith and Love employ
On each St. Andrew's Day.



DOUBTINGS.

St. Thomas the Apostle.

Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed : blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.—John xx. 29.

DOUBTING soul ! lay down thy fears,
 For thy Lord is nigh thee ;
 Joy for sadness, smiles for tears,
 Jesus will supply thee.

Plead not reason's poor pretence,
 Trust what God hath told thee ;
 Lean not on thine erring sense,
 When His arms enfold thee.

Tho' His coming be delayed,
 Truth can never alter ;
 Where His promise has been made,
 Faith should never falter.

Tho' the East be dull, and grey,
 Still the dawn is clearing ;
 Shadows soon shall flee away,
 Before Christ's appearing.

Thou wouldst with thine eyes behold,
What thy soul desireth ;
Thou wouldst to thine ears have told,
What thy sense requireth.

Faith, inured to harder tasks,
In submission kneeleth,
Nor, with doubting Thomas, asks
More than God revealeth.

Many a soul thou canst not see
To His law attendeth ;
Many a hidden heart and knee
Daily to Him bendeth ;

Unseen thousands watch and pray,
With their lamps all burning ;
Hast'ning with their prayers the day
Of their Lord's returning.

And the eye of Faith perceives
How that day is breaking ;
And its ear, 'mid rustling leaves,
Hears the morning waking.

And the fainting soul is blest,
With the fresh'ning breezes,
Blowing o'er the land of rest,
Whence we look for Jesus.

Lift then, trembling heart! thine eyes,
Soon His rays shall reach thee ;
Blushing dawn, and reddening skies,
Of His coming teach thee.

Watch above, and wait below,
While thy soul receiveth
That high blessing, he shall know,
Who seeing not believeth.



CONVERSION.

*The Conversion of St. Paul.**And they glorified God in me.—Gal. i. 24.*

SAVIOUR when our souls would trace
 All the wonders of Thy Grace,
 And by sweet experience prove
 How, thro' power of mighty love,
 Harden'd hearts perverse and proud,
 Can before Thy Cross be bow'd,
 Be Thy great Apostle Paul
 Type and Teacher of it all!

Greater difference cannot be,
 Than in Saul and Paul we see;
 He—who Christ and Christ's abhorr'd—
 Lowly breathes—'Who art thou, Lord?'
 He—who calmly stood and own'd
 Those who holy Stephen stoned—
 Trembling and astonish'd too,
 Sighs, 'What wilt Thou have *me* do?'

Grace his soul with blessings reaches;
 He, who persecuted, preaches;
 He, who with the bigot's rod
 Chasten'd once the Church of God,

Takes up now th' insulted Cross,
Counts as naught its shame and loss,
And, before he lays it down,
Wins a martyr's palm and crown !

Such God's glorious power of old !
And the story still is told
Every year, that brings again
This high festival to men,
These glad tidings to proclaim,
Jesus Christ is still the same,
Still the same, He changes never,
Yesterday, to-day, for ever.

That, which humbled to the knee,
The proud-hearted Pharisee—
That, which pardoned all the wrong,
He had done to Christ so long—
That, which with its soft control
Sooth'd to love his stubborn soul—
Still remains, it changes never !
Yesterday, to-day, for ever !

Blessed Saviour, when we stray,
Meet us on our will-ward way,
Meet, and plead with us, till we
Yield, repent, and turn to Thee,
And beneath the beaming grace
Of Thy reconcilèd face,
Like the great Apostle, prove
Converts to Thy gentle love.

DAILY PRAYER.

—•—

**The Presentation of Christ in the Temple,
COMMONLY CALLED THE PURIFICATION OF ST. MARY
THE VIRGIN.**

The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple; even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in.—Mal. iii. 1.



HE days of separation past,
Commanded by the Word,
The Virgin Mary brings her Child,
To offer to the Lord.

Thanksgivings for His wondrous love,
Her grateful thoughts employ,
For blessings spared, and bliss bestow'd,
Life, and a mother's joy!

Thro' childbirth she hath safely past,
Thro' fear of worldly shame,
Her body kept from grief and harm,
Her purity from blame.

And now she comes, her vows to pay,
His law her sacred guide,
Her glorious infant in her arms,
Her husband by her side.

More than a mother's common joy
Her thoughtful heart beguil'd,
For to her breast she knew she prest
More than a common Child.

The Hope of all the ends of earth
Then on her bosom lay,
Whom saints had sought, while Prophets taught
The coming of His day.

She knew the prize, for which all eyes
So long had strain'd, was won,
And how 'that Holy Thing' was both
Her Saviour, and her Son.

O wondrous mingling of the love
A mother only knows
With the deep reverence, which a soul
Upon its God bestows!

Her arms His cradle—while His grace
Sustains her, lest she fall:
He draws from her life's daily food,
She draws from Him her all!

No glory of the days of old,
When Great Jehovah bow'd
Beneath the Temple gates of gold,
And entered in a cloud,

Was equal to that gentle light
Of reconciling Love,
Which now, thro' all the Holy Place,
Comes beaming from above.

God's rising Sun on Israel's cloud
Its rainbow hues hath thrown,
A Light, to lighten Gentile homes,
The Glory of His own.

But who were they that knew that Light,
And—in that crowding throng—
Saw Jesus—in that little babe—
So meekly borne along?

Who realised the blessed hope,
Which had their hearts beguiled,
And Israel's consolation saw
In that long-look'd-for Child?

They who, in holy commune, long
With their dear God had kept,
And wakeful watched the break of dawn,
While all around them slept.

They who, with aged eyes, had searched
Deep thro' the Sacred Word,
And caught each sign, whose Light divine
Proclaim'd their coming Lord.

They—who, with fastings and with prayers
Both night and day, did crave
The Lord's salvation to behold,
Before they saw the grave :—

They coming in—as was their wont
In former anxious days—
There find the Saviour sought so long,
And Prayer is changed to Praise.

So keep us ever waiting, Lord,
In daily prayer for Thee :
For who can say what hour we may
Thy second Advent see ?

This Word at least is fix'd and sure,
That they—who seek to gain
Thy glad salvation for their souls—
Shall never seek in vain.

The long delays of weary days
In Thy good time shall cease,
Some blessed morn Thou wilt return,
And we depart in peace.



EMBER DAYS.

St. Matthias's Day.

And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two Thou hast chosen, That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. And they gave forth their lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.—Acts i. 24, 25, 26.



HEY do their best, make twofold choice,
Then cast their lot before the Lord;
And kneeling low, with heart and voice,
Plead the fulfilment of His Word.

The sad default of him, who late
Had sinn'd so deep, and brought such shame
Upon the high and holy state,
Of those who bore the Sacred Name,

Bids them with trembling hearts refuse
Alone to bear the awful load
Which rests on those, who needs must choose
One who may touch the Ark of God.

But still they do their best,—with care,
From those who knew, and loved their Lord,
Who had walked with Him everywhere,
Witness'd His deeds, and learnt His word,

Two they select, whose names they lay
With prayer, and lot before the Throne,
Asking the Lord Himself to say
Which His Apostle He will own.

And taught by lessons such as these
May we, upon this Holy Day,
With lifted hearts and bended knees,
For true and faithful Pastors pray.

And, at each solemn Ember-tide,
When those, who rule God's Church, accord
The lot they cast, but cannot guide,
For its disposal to the Lord ;—

Let us their consecrating hands
With fervent Faith sustain on high,
And, o'er the kneeling white-robed bands,
Thus help to guide them wittingly.

To search, to choose, to set apart,
This is their task, and this their care ;
They do their best with earnest heart,
And let us do our best in prayer.

O if but half the breath, that's spent
To vex the weak, and blame the wrong,
Found thus in Faith and Prayer its vent,
How glad would be the Church's song

As looks the morning forth, how soon
Her light o'er all the earth would swell;
Clear as the Sun, fair as the Moon,
Like banner'd army terrible.

Revive Thy work, O Lord revive
Thy drooping work, in these our days,
Make us *with* Thee in Prayer to strive,
That we *in* Thee may rest with Praise.

Awake, O North, thou South wind blow,
Upon God's garden blow, and move
Its hidden spices thence to flow,
And perfume all the world with Love.



LADY DAY.

The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

*Hail! thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee ;
blessed art thou among women.—Luke i. 28.*

THE world to-day divides its year,
And gathers up its golden gear ;
With cautious heart, and careful hands,
Takes in its rents, lets out its lands,
And strains its anxious eyes across
The last six months of gain or loss.

This day the world, with cunning arts,
Takes deeper hold on most men's hearts ;
Some loss has sour'd them, or some gain
Ensnared them with its golden chain ;
Some other day, Heav'n's purer bliss
Were easier thought on, than on this.

And yet what day in all the year
Should bring the upper world so near
As this—which glorifies the Love,
That left Its majesty above,
And stoop'd to be, as on this day,
The tenant of a 'house of clay.'

He, who was rich, becoming poor,
To give us riches, that endure ;
He, who was high, becoming low,
That we might to His stature grow ;
He, who was God, becoming man,
To save us by His wondrous plan.

This day He left His fair estate,
That from this day the Church might date
Her title deeds to that abode,
For her resign'd awhile by God,
That she—as His espousèd bride—
Might there dwell with Him, side by side.

Then, when the world is full of self,
And counts its gains, and hoards its pelf,
And strives to grasp, with surest hold,
Its lands, its silver, and its gold ;
Let our whole hearts this day be given
To their inheritance in Heaven.

O Saviour ! Thou this day didst take
A human body, for our sake ;
To share with us the griefs of life,
Its watchings, weariness, and strife ;
All that belongs to man, but sin,
Thou didst this day Thyself begin.

In flesh Thou didst Thyself entomb,
Thou didst not hate ' the Virgin's womb ; '

Whole months in secret Thou didst lie,
Waiting for Thy Nativity;
Not wearied by one hour, which can
Prove Thee more truly 'very man.'

Some griefs Thou mightst have had the less,
If man's first days of helplessness,
With all the travail, toil, and tears,
That wait on childhood's tedious years,
Had been passed by; and Thou hadst come,
In perfect manhood, from Thy home.

But we had wanted much to prove
The depth, and oneness of Thy love,
The secret links of many a tie,
Whose all-prevailing sympathy,
(Which we could then have never known,)
Now makes us feel Thee all our own.

Saviour of infants! Thou didst rest,
Helpless, upon Thy mother's breast,
Saviour of children! Thou didst play
And grow beside her, day by day,
All human life to soothe and save,
Up from the cradle to the grave.

There's not an hour of life below,
A want, a weakness, or a woe,
In which—to help the human heart—
Thou hast not borne Thyself a part,
That we may draw our best relief
From Thy dear fellowship in grief.

Saviour ! as low as Thou didst bend
From Heav'n to be the Sinner's Friend,
So high our nature lift with Thine,
Till human things become divine,
And Thy Eternal love once more
God's image to the soul restore.

And when we cling too close to earth,
Forgetful of our Heavenly birth,
And—for the love of its poor dross—
Despise Thy crown, or shun Thy cross,
O let this festal day reprove
Such wrong to Thine incarnate love.



OPEN-AIR PREACHING.

St. Mark's Day.

And He gave some, apostles ; and some, prophets ; and some, evangelists ; and some, pastors and teachers ; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.—Eph. iv. 11, 12.



FOR the Evangelic faith and love,
That graced the golden Apostolic days,
That drew down gifts uncounted from above,
And souls unnumbered up to Heaven could
raise.

When, burning to reclaim a ransomed world,
Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, Teachers, all
Blew with one breath the Gospel trumpet's call,
And the bright banner of the Cross unfurled.
Then Apostolic order did not keep
Men from the work of God, where'er it lay ;
They watched the fold, but if one went astray,
Love Evangelic sought the wand'ring sheep :
No church can truly Apostolic prove,
That wants the fire of Evangelic love !

I love my Church, for in her walls I see
Shelter, not only for the souls of men
But for those dear, and deathless truths, which we
Hold as the charter of our faith ; and when

The lamp of truth, placed elsewhere, hath been driven
By every wind of doctrine, I have seen
Its flame without one flicker rise to Heaven,
Within her precincts tranquil and serene.
Yet if I thought one soul, without her bound
Wand'ring 'mid gloom and darkness, might be found,
I'd from her very altar snatch that Light,
And bear it forth amid the gusts of night,
Without one fear that, 'neath the wildest sky,
'Twould even tremble, much less fail or die.

So when this solemn day, each year, returns,
And, toss'd about with winds, the sacred ark
Seeks the Rock's shelter, and there duly learns
All that we owe th' Evangelist St. Mark ;
The Heavenly doctrine of that blessed Word,
Which he embalmed in Holy Scripture's page,
To be lisp'd out by youth, conn'd o'er by age,
Read by the learn'd, by the unlearn'd heard ;
Then, let the fervour of Thy Gospel truth
Fill every heart, O Lord, throughout the land,
Until young men and maidens, age and youth,
Swell, with one voice, that great prophetic band,
Which must be found amid the sons of men,
Ere Thou, O Saviour Christ, to earth return again.



CHRIST ALL IN ALL.

St. Philip and St. James's Way.

I am the way, the truth, and the life : no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.—John xiv. 6.

TEMPTED oft to go astray,
 Jesus Christ ! be Thou my ' Way ;'
 Mocked with shadowy dreams of youth,
 Jesus Christ ! be Thou my ' Truth ;'
 Wearied out with manhood's strife,
 Jesus Christ ! be Thou my ' Life ;'
 Such to Thy saints wast Thou of yore,
 Unchangeable Thou art, and shalt be evermore.

Thou the Way art, Thou the prize
 That beyond the journey lies ;
 Thou the Truth art, Thou the guide,
 Gone before, yet by our side ;
 Everlasting Life below
 It is truly Thee to know ;
 Such to Thy saints wast Thou of yore,
 Unchangeable Thou art, and shalt be evermore.

Thus with Thee are linked the names
Of St. Philip and St. James ;
Thee they found, both night and day,
Precious 'Truth,' and guarded 'Way ;'
Thee, in the last martyr-strife,
Thee, O Lord, they found their 'Life ;'
Sure, what to them Thou wast of yore,
Unchangeable Thou art, and shalt be evermore.

Would we follow, true and bold,
Steps of holy men of old ;
Freely leave the world, to prove
Our, like their, undying love ;
And as freely life lay down,
To receive a martyr's crown ?
O Saviour of the saints of yore ! ,
Be Thou to us, what Thou to them wast, evermore!



CHURCH MISSIONS.

St. Barnabas the Apostle.

The Son of Consolation.—Acts iv. 36.



LORD! what records of Thy love
Live in the sacred page,
Thy wondrous love on Thy dear Church
Bestow'd from age to age.

Never, since first she saw Thy face,
Did she for guidance plead,
But Thou wert near at hand to hear,
And help her in her need.

Just what she wanted, Thou didst lend,
Of gifts, from day to day,
And Sons of Consolation send
To cheer her on her way—

Large hearts, which loved with such a love,
So fresh, so full, so free,
That nothing they could call their own
Would be denied to Thee.

Their lives, their loves, their all, they deem'd
Off'rings both due and meet ;
Their lands they sold, and brought the gold,
And laid it at Thy feet.

If Judas here, or Demas there,
Shadowed Thy light with shame ;
And left the stain of love of gain
Upon the Christian's name :

If Ananias and his wife
Kept back the price, and lied ;
Saint Barnabas, thro' Thy great grace,
More than their lack supplied.

In nature and in name alike
True to Thy Church and Thee ;
The Son of Consolation called,
And rightly named was he.

Nor hast Thou left Thyself, O Lord,
Without Thy witness here ;
Strong hands, and gentle hearts to toil
Onward from year to year.

Men who are willing, both to spend,
And to be spent, to prove
That still Thine Apostolic Church
Feels Evangelic love.

And chief amongst that glorious band,
Thy Mission-Church we hail,
Which from no self-denial shrinks,
And at no fear grows pale ;

Which lands and homes can leave behind,
Obedient to Thy word ;
And, with her staff and scrip go forth,
To do Thy will, O Lord.

When, harass'd with domestic strife,
Our hearts despond and fear ;
And, sick of home's too languid life,
Seek what may soothe, and cheer ;

The soldiers of the Cross abroad
The palmiest days recall,
Of the united fervent zeal
Of Barnabas and Paul.

Best jewels of her crown are they,
Bright on her brow they glow ;
True Sons of Consolation sent
To all Thy Church below.

Then use we this glad Festival
To lift our hearts in praise,
For all the help by Thee vouchsafed
Thy Church in former days :

And, ere we leave Thy holy house,
Low bow we down in prayer,
In Jesu's name, to ask the same
Continuance of Thy care.

Thy manifold and glorious gifts
Lord grant us full and free,
Nor leave us destitute of grace
To use them all for Thee.



BIRTH-DAYS.

St. John Baptist's Nativity.

*And thou, child, shalt be called The Prophet of the Highest
for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways.—
Luke i. 76.*



IN every Christian home on earth
A little church is found,
A type and part of that great whole
Which circles all around.

There the domestic altar stands,
In honour of the Lord,
Where generations, past and gone,
From childhood have adored.

And there the father, God's high-priest,
In grateful worship pays
Morning and evening sacrifice
Of daily prayer and praise.

There sins are mourn'd, there joy and peace
To the repentant come :
God hath on earth no holier spot
Than is a Christian home.

And they, who use it rightly, feel
In every common hour,
And every simplest deed, and word,
Its elevating power.

They eat and drink in Jesu's name,
By Him are daily fed,
Half sacramental deem the food,
He gives as daily bread.

And feasts and fasts devoutly keep,
On days ordain'd by Heaven ;
The birth-days, and the death-days of
The children God hath given.

Remote in distant years of time,
When home is far away,
And all are dead and gone, that kept
With them each festal day,

They will, in dreams, live o'er again
Those lov'd but vanished hours,
And breathe once more, as if still fresh,
The incense of their flowers.

The birth-days of a Christian home
Are festivals of love,
Which shed their glow on life below,
And train for life above.

Soft, as the dews of Heaven, they fall
Upon the human heart,
Old memories waken, and recall
New life to every part,

Few are the birth-days which the Church
Observes with holy cheer,
Except her Lord's, Saint John's alone
Throughout the sacred year.

As if to lift our earth-bound hearts
Above the things which are,
Teaching how death-days, when in Christ,
Are brighter days by far.

While by the side of him, whose life
Like morning star arose,
To light the way of breaking Day
That on the mountains glows ;

She, in the lessons of her truth,
To shew us, what is good,
Contrasts another Birth-day, kept
In shame, and lust, and blood.

O Saviour ! when this day returns,
—Bright with its summer bloom,—
And, on St. John's Nativity,
Points to his early tomb :

Be this its holy use, to make
The Birth-days of each year,
Tho' dear for all their human joy,
As helps to Heav'n most dear.

The Baptist's pure and holy life,
Severe from early youth,
His bold rebuke of haughty vice,
His patient zeal for truth :

His preparation of Thy way,
His living in Thy love,
His brief, but hard and toilsome day,
His early rest above :

Be these our Birth-day monitors,
Our souls for Heaven to train,
Teaching us how, to live is Christ,
And how to die is gain.



PEACE.



St. Peter's Day.

And, behold, the Angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison ; and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands.— Acts xii. 7.



WHO is he that sleeps in chains,
Fears not penalties or pains :
Calmly sleeps, tho' malice waits
For him at his prison gates ;

Dreams not of impending sorrow,
Which may visit him to-morrow,
But, like infant on the breast
Of its mother, sinks to rest ?

He to whom his God hath given
Peace on earth, and hope in Heav'n !

Who is he whom watch and ward,
Lock and key, and wakeful guard,
Rome's quaternions, rough and bold,
Chains and prison, cannot hold ?

From whose hands the fetters fall,
To whom angel voices call,
Who by angel light doth see,
And by angel hand is free?
 He for whom, both night and day,
 The Redeemer's Church doth pray!

When our peace with God is made,
None can vex, or make afraid :
Tho' the wrath of man be strong,
It can do the soul no wrong ;
Fear of evil tidings never
Can the trusting heart dis sever
From the rest, and the repose,
The believing spirit knows :
 Cheering thoughts ! which Christians may
 Deepen on St. Peter's Day.

And when prayer with one accord
Rises earnest to the Lord ;
Tho' the might of mortal power
Darkling o'er the Church may lower ;
Tho' the promise seem to fail,
And the gates of Hell prevail,
God will never leave His own,
Unprotected or alone :
 Ere His Church shall want a friend,
 Angels will from Heaven descend.

THE POOR MAN'S OFFERING.

St. James the Apostle.

And they immediately left the ship, and their father, and followed Him.—Matt. iv. 22.

THE Church of God, with equal care,
 Her blessings and her work doth share
 With all, both high and low ;
 Her holiest is her highest place,
 No rank, but that of growth in grace,
 Her loving heart doth know.

She, at the poor man's cottage door,
 Stands blessing all his simple store,
 And finds, in his abode,
 Ofttimes the fairest gifts that can
 Be offered, by unworthy man,
 To an all-holy God.

The darling child, who from his youth
 Hath grown in stature and in truth,
 His parents' prop and pride,
 Hath stoop'd his shoulder to the Cross,
 Hath gained a life of worldly loss,
 And for his Saviour died.

He left the cottage-home so dear,
Dash'd from his eye the starting tear,
 And bade a long farewell
To the low roof, and creeping vine
That round that blessed spot doth twine,
 Where home's belov'd ones dwell.

He bore the Cross to foreign lands,
O'er frozen seas, and burning sands,
 He bade its banner wave,
There, with the sword of God's good word,
Won souls, by thousands, to the Lord,
 Then found a martyr's grave.

Think not his sacrifice was small :
Poor home ! poor parents ! they were all
 His sum of earthly bliss !
The rough but old familiar spot
Can never be by him forgot,
 In the next world or this.

Up to the latest hour of life,
Thro' all its changeful calm and strife,
 That memory did come
Like a soft breath of summer air,
And the last words he breath'd in prayer,
 They were of Heaven and home.

The poor man's son, tho' simply reared,
His home doth hold as much endeared
 As do the richest theirs ;

The scene of all his early years,
Hallowed alike by smiles and tears,
By pleasures, and by cares.

If he with earnest heart doth bring
To God this free-will offering,
The firstling of his store ;
Tho' richer men may deem it small,
Yet, if he give to God his all,
What can he offer more ?

And thus the memory of St. James
In cottage homes affection claims,
When, in some poor abode,
The child of many hopes and prayers,
Despite of added household cares,
Is offered up to God.

The fisher's son, without delay
To Christ obedient, shows the way
The poor for God may take ;
How England's cottage homes may yield
Strong labourers for the harvest field,
To toil for Jesu's sake.

And not alone in learning's haunt,
And palace-homes, all that we want
For the great work is found ;
Bold soldiers of the Cross, and true,
Amongst the very humblest too,
With willing hearts abound.

O Saviour of the world ! Thy call,
In cottage-home, and palace-hall,
 Is wanting, to supply
Those, who, like James, their fisher's net,
Or Paul, their learnèd ease forget,
 For Thee to live and die.



HIDDEN SAINTS.

— ♦ —
St. Bartholomew the Apostle.

When thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee.—John i. 48.

HIDDEN close from human eye
 Violets do love to lie,
 Only for the tell-tale air,
 No one could discover where :
 But there's an Eye which on them dwells
 With sunshine, soft and true,
 A Hand which fills their purple bells
 With drops of morning dew.

Tho' they love the shady nook,
 And with bee, and babbling brook
 Communing, with fragrant sigh,
 Live, and bloom, and breathe, and die ;
 No gloomy anchorites are they,
 In lonely severance sad,
 But in their gentle, quiet way,
 They make God's creatures glad.

So His hidden saints abound,
Scattered everywhere around,
Violets of Heavenly birth,
Perfuming all parts of earth ;
Fed by the sun and dews of Heaven,
They sleep not night nor day,
Still giving back, what they are given,
In their own quiet way.

Theirs no plea for public place,
Modesty their fairest grace,
So to soothe, that none may know
Whence the healing perfumes flow ;
Themselves, unseen by human eye,
By human hand unsoiled,
Their soul's immortal purity
By thought of self unspoiled.

There to grow in grace and love,
Fitter for their place above ;
Useful in the humblest way,
Fragrant even in decay ;
And all the while their covenant
With Heaven and earth fulfil,
The only thing of God they want,
Power to do His will.

So beneath the fig-tree's shade,
Where of old Nathaniel paid
To the Lord his hidden vows ;
Thro' its broad umbrageous boughs,

Upon the saint's lone hour of need,
Fell Heaven's approving smile,
And owned an Israelite indeed,
In whom there was no guile.

Almost from himself concealed,
Now to God he stands revealed ;
Now the blessed fruit receiving,
Which had grown from meek believing,
The hidden saint his Lord ordains
His messenger to be,
To gather in far richer gains,
And greater things to see.

Thence the Saint, unknown and lowly,
Set apart by God, and holy,
Changed in office, and in name,
Saint Bartholomew became ;
And on his day, the Church doth pray
Of God, in Jesu's name,
To love that word, which he believed,
Preach, and receive the same.



THE MAN OF BUSINESS.

St. Matthew the Apostle.

And as Jesus past forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom ; and He saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed Him.—Matt. ix. 9.



FROM fisher's net, from fig-tree's shade,
 God gathers whom He will ;
 Touched by His grace, all men are made
 His purpose to fulfil.

But not alone from shady nooks
 Fresh with life's noon-tide dew,
 From humble walks or quiet books,
 Calls He His chosen few.

Out of the busiest haunts of life,
 Its most engrossing cares,
 Its nightly travail, daily strife,
 Self-woven golden snares,—

He for His vineyard doth provide,
 His gentle voice doth move
 The world's keen votaries to His side
 With Its persuasive love.

So Matthew left his golden gains,
At the great Master's call ;
His soul the love of Christ constrains
Freely to give up all.

The tide of life was at its flow,
Rose higher day by day ;
But he a higher life would know
Than that which round him lay.

Nor fortune, bright with fav'ring smile,
Can tempt him with her store ;
Too long she did his heart beguile,
He will be hers no more.

To one sweet Voice his soul doth list,
And, at its ' Follow me,'
Apostle, and Evangelist,
Henceforth for Christ is he.

O Saviour ! when prosperity
Makes this world hard to leave,
And all its pomps and vanity
Their meshes round us weave :

When Mammon with its subtle chain,
Fair, because forged in gold,
The soul, which up to Heav'n would strain,
In captive thrall doth hold :

When life with all its balmiest hours
In sunshine round us lies ;
And bee-like, 'mid a thousand flowers,
Fond fickle fancy flies :

O grant us grace, that to Thy call
We may obedient be ;
And, cheerfully forsaking all,
May follow only Thee.



GUARDIAN ANGELS.

St. Michael and all Angels.

*Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them
who shall be heirs of salvation ?—Heb. i. 14.*



VER round Thy glorious throne,
Where Thou sittest, Lord ! alone,
Veil'd in light and clothed in love,
Bright adoring angels move.

They to do Thy bidding wait,
Honouring Thine awful state :
Watchful eyes and folded wings
Circle Thee, the King of kings.

From the world's remotest prime,
Since the earliest hours of time,
Thou to man hast let them bear
Proofs of Thy undying care.

Eager for the sweet employ,
Even in the midst of joy ;
Never so supremely blest,
As when succouring the distress :

Golden harp and starry crown
Willingly awhile laid down,
If Thy voice but bid them go
To relieve some human woe :

Living in the happy air
Which surrounds Thy presence there ;
They inhale with breathing heart
That pure Love, which Lord Thou art :

And the lowest share they can
Have, in saving sinful man,
Is the highest blessing given,
Even in the courts of Heaven.

Once, on charge of sorrow sent,
They—almost unwilling—went ;
(If the hearts, to Thee so true,
Could Thy will unwilling do :)

Went to close that crystal door,
By which mortal never more
From the ways of sin and strife
Shall re-seek the Tree of Life.

But if once to earth they came,
Arm'd with sword of living flame,
To themselves and man, in guise
As it were of enemies :—

They were truest friends indeed,
Helped him most in time of need,
When they kept him from that tree,
Which eternal death would be :

For eternal life in sin
Is a living death within :
Happy they, whose hands did miss
Such a suicide as this.

Ever since that hour of grief,
They to man have brought relief,
Viewless blessings have provided,
And, with viewless hands, have guided :

Promises from Heaven did bear ;
Answers brought to wrestling prayer ;
On th' unwilling shoulder laid
Gentle force, the weak to aid :

Timely by the faithful stood,
Kept th' obedient hand from blood ;
To the pèrverse brought delay,
When upon his wilful way :

'Wondrously' for Israel wrought,
Judges to her councils brought ;
Samson's strength, and Gideon's sword,
To the battles of the Lord.

Watch beside the prophet kept,
When dispirited he slept ;
Touched, and woke, and gave him food,
Against hungry solitude :

To the Ethiopian brought
Him, who Christ's salvation taught ;
To the Gentile soldier bare
Answer to his alms and prayer :

Soothed the holy prisoner's pains,
Woke him up, and loosed his chains ;
Hope of life, and shelt'ring shore,
To the saints in shipwreck bore.

Thus from age to age, O Lord,
Did Thine Angel bands afford
Help in danger, joy in woe,
To Thy suff'ring Church below.

Ministering spirits sent
Both to follow and prevent,
Lest the loved ones, Thou dost own,
Dash their foot against a stone.

But with tend'rest, gentlest love,
All their other care above,
They with earnest hearts and eyes
Watch'd the wondrous Sacrifice.

Follow'd with admiring gaze
All their Lord's mysterious ways,
From the day He stooped to men,
Till he rose to Heaven again.

One to 'blessed' Mary came,
Told the hour and breathed The Name ;
One to shepherds in the field
Their incarnate God revealed.

Many, when the fight was o'er,
To the desert comfort bore ;
Eager who should first appear,
Their exhausted Lord to cheer.

In the agony and sweat
Of His prayers on Olivet,
One, to wipe His brow of blood,
And bring strength, beside Him stood.

Two were near Him when He rose,
Laid aside His burial clothes,
And with ling'ring fond delay
Sat to watch where Jesus lay.

And, when He on high ascended,
Wrapt in clouds, by hosts attended,
Hail'd, while entering Heaven's abode,
Son of Man ! and Son of God !

Two, in robes of white array'd,
Willingly behind Him stay'd,
To uplift the hearts, that yearn
O'er His loss, to His return.

Glorious God ! Who didst ordain
This Thy bright angelic train,
Always in Thy courts to do
Service to Thee, high and true ;

Grant that they, for us on earth,
Thro' our right of second birth,
May, as guardian angels, move
Round our paths with Heavenly love.

This for Jesu's sake we ask :
Dear to them the blessed task !
O ! to us may grace be given,
Here to serve, as they in Heaven !



GOOD PHYSICIANS.

**St. Luke the Evangelist.**

Luke, the beloved Physician.—Col. iv. 14.



WHEN languid frame, or throbbing pulse,
The pride of life subdues,
And colours all its roseate bloom
With sorrow's soberer hues :

How sweet to think that he, who stands
Beside our bed of pain,
And thoughtful counts the ebbing sands
Which yet for us remain :—

Comes in the humble strength of Faith
Such comfort to afford,
As best may help the deeper work
Of his Physician Lord.

And while with skilful hand he tries
Diseases to control,
Not only sees a mortal frame,
But an immortal soul :

And prays for grace to do his part,
In all God's wondrous plan,
And sanctifies his healing art,
To the *best* good of man.

Puffed not with pride of human skill,
With hushed and awful breath,
He meekly comes to do Thy will,
O Lord of Life, and Death :

Delay the sufferer longer here,
That he may holier be ;
Or feel, how well man cannot keep
One ripened soul from Thee.

Such simple faith, such child-like trust
His best degree will prove,
Physician in the schools below,
And in Thy school above.

O that, amid the noble band
Of those, who live to heal
The sicknesses which sin hath made,
More might be found, who feel—

That the sick room's a holy place,
And the sick man is given,
Not to be merely kept on earth,
But sanctified for Heaven.

O God! on such a day as this,
Let us with special prayer
All those, who heal throughout our land,
Commend to Thy good care.

Keep them from pestilence by night,
From sickness at noonday,
Tho' thousands by their side may fall,
Drive noisome things away.

And make them hallowed means of good
In all they think and do,
While truthful to their healing art,
Not unto Thee less true.

Physicians of the body they—
By Grace's soft control
May they become, like good St. Luke,
Physicians of the soul!



UNITY OF SPIRIT.

St. Simon, and St. Jude, Apostles.

That they all may be one ; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us : that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me.—John xvii. 21.

HEART in heart, and hand in hand,
Once went forth the little band ;
One in thought, and word, and deed,
Unity their law and creed :

Then they conquer'd, in the might
Of their oneness, and their right :
Then the will of God was done,
When they all in Christ were one.

Then the Church of God arose,
Fair despite of all her foes ;
On the broad foundation laid,
Prophets and Apostles made ;
Jesus Christ Himself alone,
Basement rock, and corner-stone,
All the rest, in modest pride,
Built on Him, and side by side.

Lord, Thy Church in latter days
Wanteth much these holy ways ;
Wanteth much that gain, which lies
Ever in self-sacrifice ;
Self too proudly keeps its place,
Gifts precedence take of grace,
Men are not content to be
Nothing, when exalting Thee !

Pardon for the past we pray,
Lord, upon this holy day ;
For the future, grace to lead
Safe thro' every time of need ;
Like St. Simon and St. Jude,
With Thy unity imbued,
Holy temples let us be
Acceptable, Lord, to Thee.



THE SAINTS OF GOD.

All Saints' Day.

A great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the Throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.—
Rev. vii. 9.



FEW bright leaders of her host,
God's glory, and the Church's boast,
She hath set forth, and mark'd by name,
Fair in the lists of holy fame;

To cheer the many with the few,
And show what grace in man can do.

Back from their helms of Hope divine,
Reflected sunbeams flash and shine,
Marking where gallant warriors stand,
With buckler poised, and sword in hand,
First of the martyr army they,
To lead it on at dawn of day.

But as, behind those stars most bright
Which meet us in the front of night,
Myriads on myriads have their place,
Far in the hidden realms of space,
Unseen by man, but to the eye
Of God as bright as those more nigh;—

So in His Church have ever been
Thousands, whom none but He hath seen,
Yet in His eye as bright and fair,
As martyrs and apostles were,
Who, tho' their lives seemed still and calm,
Shall wear the Martyr's Crown and Palm.

Here upon earth they were unknown,
But there's a Book before the Throne,
The Book of Life—in which the Lord
Doth all the lives of Saints record ;
And, in the day when He doth spare,
Their names shall be found written there.

O what a close communion-bond
Of fellowship most full and fond
Christ's mystic body doth entwine,
Together knit with cords divine,
One life electric thro' them all,
On to the Judgment from the Fall.

One family in Heaven and earth,
Bound by the ties of second birth ;

None dead, tho' some their work have done,
Their battle fought, their freedom won;
All in the Lord alive and blest,
Tho' some may toil and some may rest.

Their earthly home a nameless spot,
Unknown, or haply long forgot;
Where, in some mountain-cottage rude,
Or city's crowded solitude,
Their gentle lives did meekly move
In the still ways of earnest love.

On beds of noisome sickness laid,
In poverty's depressing shade,
Struggling against the world's distress
With unrepining gentleness,
Their robes unspotted, tho' the road
Was deep and rough that led to God.

Their simple lives exalted high
By unaffected piety,
Tho' sad and sombre in their hue,
And common-place in all they do,
This colouring of the rainbow take,
That all is done for Jesu's sake.

'Twas ever thus from earliest time,
That God's elect in every clime,
Tho' hidden deep, and unobserved,
Like scattered salt, have still preserved
His blessing (lest it turn again),
To the rebellious sons of men.

And when in solemn judgment state
He holds His court, a throng so great
Shall rise before th' astonished sight,
Bearing their palms, and clothed in white ;
No man could number those who'll stand,
In that great day at God's right hand.

His scattered treasures He will claim,
So dear He knows them all by name ;
When he makes up the precious store,
And counts His 'jewels' o'er and o'er :
Of all that were on earth His care,
Not one shall be found wanting there.

How solemn then this day's return
To all who for some loved one mourn ;
It soothes the heart, it sheds a grace
Of glory round that vacant place,
Which ever, on our brightest mood,
Will its dull emptiness intrude.

It speaks of life's unfailing breath
Where we despondent think of death ;
It tells of glory, and of gain,
Where we see loss and dreary pain ;
The upper world it doth reveal,
And what we see not makes us feel.

We breathe again the breath of flowers,
That round us bloomed in vanished hours ;

We commune with the spirit-band,
Walk with them through the happy-land,
Still hear each old familiar tone,
And feel that they are still our own;—

And closer draw to Christ our Head,
Link of the living with the dead;
And, lifting up our hearts on high,
This All-saints' benediction sigh—
' God give us grace to see His face,
' And meet our own in the happy place.

MENTONE: *Easter Day*, 1857.



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